LIBRARY OF CONGRESS COPYRIGHT No. 6452 1879 CITY OF WASHINGTON

FRANK LESLIE'S

BOYS' AND GIRLS' WEEKLY.

An Illustrated Journal of Amusement, Adventure, and Instruction.

Entered according to the Act of Congress, in the year 1879, by FRANK LESLIE, in the Office of the Librarian of Congress, at Washington. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

No. 658.—Vol. XXVI. NEW YORK, MAY 31, 1879. FIVE CENTS A COPY. $2.50 A YEAR, POSTAGE FREE.

ORVILLE AND DAN; Or, ADVENTURES IN JAPAN.

By COMMODORE AH-LOOK.

CHAPTER VIII.

AN INSIGHT INTO THE DOMESTIC LIFE OF THE JAPANESE.

ORVILLE and Dan were like the celebrated Irishmen at Donnybrook Fair. They fought first, and after the shindy was over asked what it had all been about, when, by dint of much reference to the books, they learned that the Ainos were semi-savages, who lived in the mountains of Yezo, and were employed by the Japanese as wood-cutters. A number of these aborigines had come down to the settlement with fuel, and camped outside the village, living in straw huts not much bigger than dog-kennels. They had heard of the arrival of the American boys, and sent their head man to Tomita to ask him if he would permit them to see the strangers, to which request he made answer:

"Certainly not. We wish our visitors to regard us as civilized beings like themselves, not as you are, half men, half animals."

The chief fired up upon hearing this, and running back to his people, who were always ready for a row with the Japs, bade them arm themselves and exterminate the settlers, the result being the *mêlée* in which the boys became implicated. After some severe fighting the fishermen succeeded in driving the Ainos out of the village, having done which they returned to Tomita's house, drank warm *Saki* (a sort of wine made from rice), and complimented the brothers and themselves upon their bravery, finally retiring and leaving the lads with their host, who, giving each of them a wooden pillow, bowed himself out.

"What are these for?" laughingly asked Dan, holding up one of the articles. "They are too low to sit upon."

"I guess they're to put under our heads," answered Orville. "Stop till the 'old man comes back with the sheets, beds and blankets, and we'll ask him."

When the boys had waited a considerable time a they concluded their host was short of bedclothes, so stretched themselves upon the matted floor and were soon fast asleep.

Orville had guessed rightly about the pillows, but they had yet to learn that the Japanese do not disrobe when retiring, and only in very cold weather use wadded quilts. About five o'clock in the morning the lads heard every one moving, whereupon they arose and were presently joined by Tomita, who signaled them to follow him into the kitchen.

"Come, let us have breakfast," he said to his wife.

The woman nodded, and calling to her daughter, motioned the brothers to join them, and they squatted in a ring round a covered tub, placed in the centre of the floor.

"What are we going to do?" inquired Dan. "Are they about to say family prayers or wash themselves?"

Mrs. Tomita removed the wooden cover from the vessel and released a cloud of steam, then plunged a dipper into its contents—rice—and rapidly filling a number of shallow bowls, served them out to the group, each person being provided with a pair of chop-sticks, with which they pushed the food into their mouths.

After disposing of a liberal quantity of this food, the party drank several cups of tea and went about their various duties, leaving their visitors to amuse themselves as they pleased.

"Orv," whispered Dan, as Mrs. Tomita removed the tub and revealed a small charcoal-fire, set in a sort of pit, "I'm blessed if they don't boil their rice in a wooden vessel. I wonder they do not burn the bottom out of it. We'll ask the old lady to let us examine it; this is a wrinkle worth knowing."

Their hostess not only permitted them to see the article, but showed them several small cooking utensils made of wood and bound with bamboo.

"I understand it," remarked Orville; "the stock from which this is manufactured is very porous and remains so damp that the fire has no effect upon it. We must try and take some of this home for father."

When they had satisfied their curiosity, they quitted the house and walked down to the beach, where they found the entire male population busy curing flounders, which were being landed from boats that had evidently been out all night.

The scene was both a busy and an exciting one, and in order to carry out their duties without soiling their garments, most of the Japs had stripped to what Dan called "harness"; namely, a cloth about their waists and a towel rolled and tied round their heads.

One lot of men, provided with carrying-poles, having slings at both ends, received the baskets of fish from the boat, and staggering up to the sheds, deposited their burdens upon the boards, then went shouting off to renew their loads. A second gang cleaned the flounders, and a third salted them, after which they were

"'OH, GO ALONG,' JEERED DAN. 'WE HAVEN'T AN ARTIST WITH US TO MAKE PICTURES FOR THE PAPERS. YOU ARE SETTING THE AINOS A BAD EXAMPLE.'"

"MINNIE'S RESCUE FROM THE WILDS OF SIBERIA," by ROGER STARBUCK, BEGINS IN OUR NEXT.

conveyed to bamboo drying-rods, and left until fit for packing.

Not a man or child was idle, and as they worked either shouted or sang, the only drawback to the scene being the ancient and fish-like smell that was almost palpable to the taste.

About noon all the catch had been attended to and when the Japs had washed down the plate and cleaned the various utensils they started for a bathe, Tomita motioning the boys to accompany them.

While they were enjoying themselves in the water a man on a lookout, built like a fire-tower and used for the purpose of spying out the approach of shoals of fish, sprung a bamboo rattle and yelled:

"*Boom, boom, fune!*" (Bang, bang, smoke—meaning a man-of-war was in sight.)

"What is it?" asked Orville; however, not having his book with him, he had to remain for a while in ignorance of the man's ejaculation.

After swimming until they were tired, the brothers waded on shore and resumed their clothes, and when their friend joined them learned that an English ship was steaming down the coast, and the natives expected she would anchor off their settlement.

The Japanese are keen traders, so as soon as they had dressed themselves all hands turned to and loaded their boats with dried salmon, sweet potatoes and green vegetables, then went off to eat their midday repast, in order that they might be ready when the vessel arrived.

The boys followed their host, and entering the house, were accosted by Mrs. Tomita, who invited them to partake of a similar meal to their breakfast, the only addition being raw salmon and fermented cabbage, which the brothers regarded suspiciously, but soulingly declined to eat.

At the conclusion of the meal Tomita and the ladies smoked several pipes of tobacco, the bowls of which were not much bigger than a marrowfat pea, and the young sailors held a consultation.

"Shall we go off to the ship?" said Dan; "the English captain can't do anything to us because we've quitted our own vessel, can he?"

"I'd like to see him," snapped Orville. "If John Bull were to serve us such a trick he'd find himself in trouble. We are American citizens, and nobody has any right to interfere with us. I'll tell you what we'll do, we'll write a letter home, and get him to mail it at the first port. Just hand your book over to Tomita; I want to ask him some questions."

Dan did as he was desired, and the following interchange ensued:

"Have you writing-paper?"

"Yes, we have writing-paper."

"Will you supply us with some?"

"We will supply you with great pleasure."

"Have you any ink?"

"Yes, we have the ink of Yamato and Tokio."

When their friend pointed out the last sentence, Orville puckered his brow, and, turning to his brother, whispered:

"Which shall we choose, Dan? It won't do to appear ignorant of these things."

"Oh, tell him Tokio," was the reply; "I guess that will do."

"Tokio," nodded Tomita, rising and going into a back room, from whence he presently emerged, bearing a small lacquered box, which he placed before them. "All right."

Dan removed the lid, and, glancing in, beheld a bottle of Indian ink, a small brush, used by the Japanese in writing, a flat stone, and several sheets of thin mulberry paper.

"We can't write on this; it's regular blotter," he said. "Orville, I think we will have to give it up."

At that moment the boom of a gun announced the arrival of the man-of-war, and, joining Tomita, they hurried down to the beach.

CHAPTER IX.

A CHANCE FOR A LETTER HOME.

AS the fishermen arrived along-side the vessel, an officer leaned over the hammock netting, and, noticing the brothers, hailed them, saying:

"Are you English sailors?"

"No, thank goodness," proudly replied Orville. "We are American citizens."

"What do they say?" demanded the British captain. "Tell them to come aboard."

"Come aboard," said the lieutenant, in a bullying tone.

"What did you say?" politely inquired Orville, who was nettled by the man's manner. "We are gentlemen traveling for the benefit of our health, and are not used to being commanded in that style."

When this response was communicated to the captain, he laughed until his sides ached; then, walking to the gangway, ascended the the ladder, and bowing to his visitors, said, good-humoredly:

"Will you American citizens honor me by coming on board my ship? No doubt you have been used to a better reception than I can give you, but we'll do the best we can."

Orv winked at his brother, and seizing the manropes, they stepped up the side and found themselves in the presence of the amused officers, one of whom, pointing to his superior, said:

"Gentlemen, permit me to introduce you to Captain O'Reilly."

"I'm proud to see you, captain," cordially observed Orville. "My name is Mr. Fillamore, and this is my brother Dan. We are about to make a little tour in Japan, and have run short of writing material. We can manage to get along with the native cookery and beds, but their stationery staggers us. They use brushes instead of pens, and write on thin blotting-paper."

"Come down into my cabin," said the captain. "I'll try and supply you with the articles you require."

His manner was so frank and jolly that the boys warmed to him at once, and when they were alone, told him the truth about their leaving the ship and of their intention to travel through the Empire of Japan.

"You must be crazy," he remarked. "The island of Yezo is principally populated by Ainos, who would kill you with great satisfaction, and as for your journeying through Hondo, the main island, it will be an impossibility. Let me take you to Hako-date and hand you over to your Consul, who will send you home."

"Oh, no, thank you," said Dan, who curled at the idea of being handed over to anybody. "We may be crazy, but we are no worse than Stanley and other explorers. You thought he was a lunatic until he crossed the dark continent."

"But, my young friend," expostulated Captain O'Reilly, "the Ainos are reported to be very savage, and may make a meal of you."

"We are not afraid of that," laughingly answered Orville. "I reckon they are vegetarians, like most of the Japs. We know enough to take care of ourselves. Don't we, brother?"

"Yes," responded Dan; "we think it will be a good idea to carry the American flag through the Empire; it will be one step toward civilizing the people."

Upon finding he could not turn them from their purposes, the captain provided them with pens, ink and paper, and told them to write what letters they wanted; after doing which he went to his library and selected some books.

This is what the brothers wrote:

"Ha-to, Island of Yezo, Japan, }
"5th June, 18—. }

"DEAR PARENTS—We are happy to inform you we have had an opportunity of leaving the *Ocean Belle*, and are about to start upon an expedition that will afford us a chance to see something of a wonderful country, our intention being to travel from one end of the Japanese Empire to the other.

"You need not feel at all alarmed about us, the natives being exceedingly friendly, and you may comfort yourselves that, under any circumstances, we shall be better off than we were with Captain Cheeseman.

"In these days of walking matches, a tramp of between three and four hundred miles is a mere trifle, so our undertaking in that line won't be any great shakes; but as we shall be the first persons who have ever carried the American flag through this land, we hope our feat will be properly appreciated at home.

"This letter will be posted at the first port touched at by H. M. S. *Roarer*, the captain of which has been very kind to us.

"Our principal reason for making this journey is to learn how the Japs manufacture their unequaled lacquer and wooden ware, the secrets of which have heretofore been jealously guarded by them. They make cooking utensils of wood, and waterproof suits of paper; there's millions in it for us if we can only get them safely out of them.

"You will be glad to hear that Dan's eyes are perfectly well, and both of us are as strong as steel.

"We will write to you again on our arrival at Yedo, the capitol of the Empire, where we hope to have an interview with the Mikado.

"Our only regret is that we can't have Nell and Rose with us, though perhaps they are better at home.

"If Cheeseman calls on you or writes, tell him how splendidly we are doing, and make him hand over our chests and the things we left on board.

"As soon as you receive this, please write us, to the care of the American Minister, Yedo, Japan.

"Tom, you can tell uncle we are very much obliged to him, but shall not require him to advance any money for us. He don't amount to much, anyway.

"We must now conclude, with love to you all.

"Yours affectionately,

"ORVILLE FILLAMORE.
"DANIEL FILLAMORE."

"What, only one letter?" inquired Captain O'Reilly, as they rose from the table.

"I will post it at Hako-date for you," showing them a portable map of Japan, a pocket compass, and a book, added, "Will you please accept these? You will find them very useful. How are you off for money?"

The boys told him they had a hundred dollars a piece, bearing which, he said:

"Now take my advice and let the paymaster change some of it into Japanese cash, which will go ten times as far as your gold."

"Thank you, Orville, as they gathered up their gifts; "you are very kind indeed."

Soon after this they were introduced to the paymaster, who inquired:

"How many dollars do you wish turned into cash?"

"We may as well have fifty each," whispered Dan to Orville.

"How many cash do you give for a dollar?" asked the latter.

"Ten thousand," merrily replied the paymaster. "You don't want a boat-load, do you?"

A hearty laugh followed this speech, and when they had converted twenty gold pieces into the currency of the country Tomita was summoned and the strings of money given into his charge.

As they left the ship the sailors, who had, by some means, heard what the brothers intended to do, manned the rigging and gave them three hearty cheers, to which the boys replied, then the Japs set up their shout and pulled for the shore.

"Those Britishers are real nice, ain't they?" said Dan, as they waved their caps in answer to the dip of the ship's ensign.

"Yes," replied Orville, "so long as you won't let them walk over you they are splendid fellows. They thought all the more of us because we stood up for our rights. Now we've had a chance to write home, we shall start upon our expedition with a light heart."

"The book," said Dan, opening the volume given them by the captain, "is called 'A Narrative of Three Years' Residence in Japan.' We'll read it the first wet day."

Upon reaching Tomita's house Orville informed him they would start up the country the next morning, which announcement almost caused the good fellow to have a fit. However, he finally became reconciled to the idea, and told them he would engage some civilized Ainos to act as their guides.

"How many shall we want?" demanded Orv, using his book.

"Leave that to me," was the answer. "I'll think it over to-night."

When the boys rose the next morning, they found the house surrounded by a crowd of hairy-headed savages.

CHAPTER X.

THE BROTHERS START UPON THEIR JOURNEY WITH THE AINOS.

ORVILLE and Dan stepped out into the verandah and had a good look at the strange specimens of humanity, who, on seeing them, gave vent to a wild cry, and down upon their hands and knees, and knocked their foreheads on the ground.

The Ainos were short, sturdy, brown-skinned beings, and much like the Japanese; the only difference being, the former wore long hair and beards and the latter shaved part of their heads and the whole of their faces.

As the Ainos were in their best clothes they seemed almost as civilized as the fishermen, and the boys were quite pleased with their appearance.

Producing his volume, Orv inquired how many men they would have to engage, and the amount of money the guides would ask to conduct them to a place called Mororan, when Tomita said they must take at least a hundred of the party, and that the Ainos' pay for the journey would be five hundred cash each.

"What?" cried Orv; "five cents apiece to travel all that distance?"

Their host gave them to understand it was twice as much as he would give, but that owing to the boys being foreigners the Ainos charged double terms, as they might have to lose their lives in defending their employers against the wild men of their own race.

"All right!" said Dan, winking at his brother. "We'll do as Stanley did, take a good crowd with us."

When the men were selected they stripped off their holiday garments and gave them to their friends to carry home, and after Tomita had procured some sets of bearing-poles and slings the cortege fell into line and awaited the pleasure of their new masters.

First were twenty-four wild-looking fellows, hairy as Esau, each of whom was armed with a short sword; next twenty-six muscular men carrying ropes and bamboo poles. Then a space was left for Orville and Dan, and behind it stood the baggage-carriers, with their poles, from both ends of which depended coarsely-made bamboo baskets, some containing cash, and others books, newspapers, rice and dried salmon, the rear of the procession being composed of the same number of warriors as the vanguard.

Orville surveyed the arrangement with considerable satisfaction, and picking out the biggest Aino from the crowd, ordered him to carry the flag, which Mrs. Tomita had mounted on a lacquer-handled Japanese spear.

The savage knelt, as though understanding the honor conferred upon him, and knocked his head upon the ground. Then rising, received his charge, and respectfully listened to the following speech, not a word of which he comprehended:

"Take this glorious emblem and carry it at the head of the procession, to show your countrymen we are coming. For your sweet brethren moiest you, poke them in the eye with the butt end, and, if you are too closely pressed, fall to the rear and let the fighting men settle their hash."

Orville delivered this so seriously that the man was quite impressed; while Dan, who could scarcely keep his countenance, whispered:

"Oh, stop; why don't you talk sense?"

"Get along," laughingly answered his brother; "all explorers make such speeches to their followers. Come, we'll go in and say good-by to our friends and settle up our little bill."

To their astonishment, Tomita refused to take a single cash either for their food, lodging, or for the provisions, etcetera, with which he had furnished them, saying he was only too glad to have had the opportunity of entertaining such distinguished gentlemen from the Far West.

"This will never do, Dan," murmured Orville; "we must make some return for his kindness."

"Suppose we give him one of our conversation books and some of Frank Leslie's papers?" suggested the other.

"Good idea," answered Orville; "the pictures will not only amuse but instruct them."

In a few minutes the presents were handed over, and Orville explained that the publications was brought inside, and the entire family made happy, Tomita receiving some copies of the *Illustrated Newspaper* and the book, his wife several numbers of the *Lady's Journal*, and the daughters a dozen papers of the BOYS' AND GIRLS' WEEKLY and the *Budget of Fun*.

Nothing could exceed the pleasure exhibited by these good people, who thought more of their gifts than they would have done of a present of as many gold watches, and for several minutes all they could do was go bow their heads upon the mats and murmur:

"*Ari-gato, ari-gato!*" (Thank, thank you.)

"Come, Orv," said Dan, "let's start; if we don't our friends will keep up that little performance all day."

As they turned to depart, Tomita rose, and, pointing to the book, made a gesture that he would like to have something written in it; upon which Orville produced a pencil, given him by the paymaster of Her Majesty's Ship *Roarer*, and, opening the volume, inscribed upon the fly-leaf:

PRESENTED
TO
TOMITA HOSEE, ESQ.,
BY
MESSRS. ORVILLE AND DANIEL FILLAMORE,
As a small token of their esteem
FOR
His Courteous Hospitality.

E Pluribus Unum.

Orville closed the cover, and returning the book to Tomita, shook hands all round, then taking his place in the procession, gave the word to start, the last they saw of their friends being a glimpse of the young ladies, who, waving their hands, cried:

"Goode-bye! goode-bye!"

"Now for our big tramp," said Dan. "We've got large enough to meet anything."

As the morning advanced the boys began to grow uncomfortably warm, their journey being uphill. However, they did not like to complain of fatigue.

About noon Dan whispered to his brother:

"Upon my word! I believe if we don't stop these Ainos, they'll walk all day. They are going quicker instead of slower. Can't you bring them to a halt?"

Orville consulted his book and shouted to them in his peculiar Japanese; hearing which they began to run, and, on reaching the top of the hill, pointed to a temple and some huts on a level piece of ground, crying:

"*Chi-ai!*" (house.)

"I reckon this is their village," said Orville. "Come, old man, stir your stumps and don't look so awfully played out."

"I haven't been used for the Astley Champion Belt," panted Dan; "my feet are all of a blister."

The Ainos were evidently very much pleased, for they began to utter their peculiar cry, which was presently answered by Iwam, the standard-bearer. Then the lads beheld a crowd of women advancing to meet them.

"My goodness!" ejaculated Orv, "haven't they got mouths! Why, their lips extend from ear to ear."

"No, they don't," said Dan; "it's tattooing."

When the females approached nearer this proved to be the case, each of them having a broad band of Indian-ink work encircling their mouths and uniting their eyebrows.

"*Mesuko!*" (woman) shouted Iwam, indicating these comical figures; "*Kip-pu, kip-pu!*" (food.)

Not understanding his companion's meaning, and relinquishing all further attempts to communicate with them in Japanese, the travelers followed their guides, who, after transferring their burdens to the ladies, escorted their employers to the temple.

"Good land! what a perfume!" exclaimed the latter, as they entered the building. "It smells like a wild beast cage!"

Iwam bowed to the ground, and uttered a peculiar sort of grunt, after which he pointed to the altar and invited the boys to inspect it.

"I wonder what all these are for?" whispered Orv, indicating a number of wands, whittled in such a manner as to be covered with tiny, curl-like shavings. "These Ainos must be champion whittlers."

"Hush!" breathed Dan; "these are their sacred symbols."

As he uttered the words, they heard terrific roars proceeding from the further end of the building, and to their astonishment, beheld eight or ten bears confined in an enormous den, before which Iwam and several of their guards were bowing as though in prayer.

"Come away, brother," cautiously remarked Orv; "no wonder the Japanese call these fellows Ainos. See, they are worshiping those hairy brutes. If we stay here they may offer us as a sacrifice."

CHAPTER XI.

AN EARTHQUAKE, AND A FIGHT WITH BEARS.

THE boys were both wrong and right about the Ainos, who, though they worship bears, do not indulge them with human food, but feed them on fish and vegetables.

There has been a great deal of rubbish written about these semi-savages, who are styled by their Japanese conquerors *Ai-no-ko*, half men, half dogs, and as the author of this story spent some months among them he will briefly describe their history:

Several thousand years ago the ancestors of these people crossed from the mainland of Asia to the island of Sagalin, now famous for its salmon fisheries; from thence they emigrated to the island of Yezo, and finding the further south they went the warmer became the climate, ultimately ventured over to Hondo, the main island of Japan, and took complete charge of what is now known as the Empire.

B. C. 660 the Tartars invaded the land from the Corea, and began to drive the Ainos toward the north, some of the savages yielding and becoming slaves of the conquerors, and others retreating until they reached Yezo, from the mountain fastnesses of which they have never been dislodged.

There are, therefore, at present, three races in Japan; the white, pure descendants of the Tartars, the brown-skinned, black-haired Ainos, and the senna-colored half-breeds; the latter forming the bulk of the population.

Although the semi-barbarians are claimed as subjects by the emperor, they are scarcely more civilized than are our own Red Indians, and to this day the Ainos worship the bear, the burning mountain, the ancient trees of their almost unexplored land, and other objects, and are as wild as Zulus.

When Iwam had paid his respects to his deities he quitted the temple, and approaching the boys, signaled them to follow him to his home, a sort of a wigwam built of clay and sticks, and utterly destitute of either chimney or windows.

At the hole forming the door stood the man's wife, whose children were both scanty and primitive.

"I can't go in there," said Orv, sniffing suspiciously. "I'm human."

"*Kip-pu!*" (food) cried Iwam, pointing into the interior and rubbing his stomach.

"Confound it," growled Dan, "I wish we knew the language. I shall be glad when we get to the main island, where we can use our book."

"See here!" whispered the other, "I believe the critter means our dinner is ready."

Iwam listened, as though endeavoring to ascertain what they meant, and presently guessing, ordered his wife into the hut, from which she shortly returned, bearing a wooden tub filled with boiled rice, flavored with fermented vegetables, upon beholding which both lads signified anything but a desire to taste it.

Their host, perceiving the boys did not relish the first course, bade his tattooed better-half produce the next—dried salmon, smeared with a red clay containing sulphur. This luxury she proceeded to tear into fragments with her teeth.

"Here, thunder, let's go, Orv!" breathed Dan. "It may suit the Ainos, but it won't do for yours truly. We shall have to be our own cooks."

"I agree with you," replied his brother; then turning to Iwam, he said, "Thank you kindly for your *kip-pu*. Please excuse us; we are troubled with dyspepsia. Your style of living is no doubt very nice, but we ain't educated up to it."

They left their fare untasted, squatted by the rice-tub, and spite of Mrs. Iwam's hospitable cries for them to return, walked off to where their baggage was piled, lighted a fire and prepared their own meal, and when they had partaken of it gave the order to resume the march.

"The country gets steeper and steeper," groaned Orville, as they crept along a narrow ledge. "I wonder when we shall reach the top of this range?"

"Teshiro, Teshiro!" shouted the flag-bearer, who was ahead.

"Come on," cried Dan, referring to his map. "He means we are in sight of a burning mountain."

The boys advanced, and after turning a bend in the path saw upon their right a volcano in full operation, while on the left was another, emitting a thin cloud of smoke.

"This is a red-hot island," remarked Orv. "All the mountains seem to be volcanic. It's a good country for sulphur."

About six o'clock they camped in a valley, where, to the brother's astonishment, the Ainos obtained fire in the following manner:

Taking some long bamboos, evidently brought for the purpose, they drove them several feet into the hard soil, and applying fire to the top, ignited the gas issuing therefrom, having done which they piled up stones around the burners, put on their wooden tubs and proceeded to boil their rice, making a separate fire for their masters.

"I will never forget old Tomita's kindness," said Dan, as they brewed a pot of tea. "He has what I call a true Christian spirit. Supposing he and a friend landed on Long Island, do you think the people there would give him an outfit like this, and refuse to take any payment for it?"

"I know blessed well they wouldn't," chuckled Orv. "If the Japs on the mainland are as nice as our old friend we shall get on splendidly," adding, after a pause: "Where are we going to sleep?"

"Under the tent of Heaven," responded his brother.

When night closed in they watched the flames of the burning mountain, and Iwam, pointing out a glimmer of light to the southward, said:

"Shari!"

"Yes, that's another volcano," observed Dan, once more referring to their map. "I'm glad Captain O'Reilly gave us this. Isn't it strange that we should be lying here looking at this British chart by the light of a natural gas-burner?"

"It ain't a British chart," indignantly answered Orville. "It is your eyesight getting bad again! Don't you see, J. H. Butler & Co., Publishers, Philadelphia, at the bottom of it?"

"Well, I want to know," replied Dan. "I shall have more faith in it, now I'm aware it's American. It seems to me the whole of Japan is dotted with volcanoes."

The words were scarcely out of his lips when the ground beneath them began to shake, and they experienced a severe shock of earthquake, which, though it scared them, had no effect upon the Ainos, who appeared rather to like it.

When the phenomenon ceased, they heard terrific growls proceeding from the rocky eminence, overgrown with pine-trees, about a quarter of a mile from where they were lying.

In an instant their guides sprang to their feet, extinguished the fires, and formed a circle around the boys, who wondered what was coming next.

"It's bears," said Dan. "Orv, hadn't you better get out the flag and use the pole as a weapon?"

His brother followed this advice, and the pair breathlessly awaited further developments, and soon, by the fitful light of the volcano, they saw two enormous brutes advancing at a shambling pace.

Although the Ainos worship the tame brutes they keep in their temples, and delight in being themselves called bears, they never scruple to attack those animals, and upon that occasion, having the Americans in charge, were nothing loth to do so, addressing the beasts in insulting tones and telling them to come on and taste the keenness of their swords, when, as though in reply to their challenge, the monsters rose upon their hind legs and rushed at them with open mouths, gleaming eyes and extended forepaws.

A scene followed that fairly beggars description, animals and men being soon in such a snarl that it was difficult to distinguish one from the other, while Orville and Dan were forced hither and thither.

At one moment the Ainos would hug the bears and the next the order was reversed; but, the odds being in favor of the human beings, they made it warm for the brutes, finally killing one and laming the other, finding which, they set up a shout of derision. As though understanding their meaning, the animal rose upon one leg, hopped forward and attempted to seize Orville with its teeth and paws.

"No, yer don't," he cried, lowering his flagstaff.

A brief struggle ensued, at the termination of which Bruin fell backward, pierced to the heart, his lifeblood gushing forth from nose and mouth.

As soon as the boy had ascertained that the beast was dead he mounted upon its body, and, waving his flag, cried:

"Hurrah!"

"Here, get down off that," indignantly remarked his brother; "that's no way to act."

"I'm only imitating what the Prince of Wales did in India," said Orv.

"Oh, go along," jeered Dan. "We haven't an artist with us to make pictures for the papers. You are setting the Ainos a bad example."

CHAPTER XII.

ORVILLE AND DAN GET INTO HOT WATER.

THE next morning the boys breakfasted off bear-meat, but were unable to save the animals' skins, which had been cut into shreds by the swords of the Ainos.

The latter had, however, secured the creatures' heads, which they stuck on poles and carried as trophies until ordered to bury them by Orville, who objected to their perfume.

For fourteen days they traveled over mountains and through forests, and on the fifteenth reached the bank of a river where they stopped to bathe.

Above them on their left, towering several thousand feet, was the volcano of Ishikari, and ahead was Yuhari, vomiting flame and smoke.

The lads stripped off their clothes, and in spite of Iwam's shouts took a header into the water, but had scarcely touched the cold stream when they discovered it was almost boiling, its sources being volcanic springs at the base of the mountains.

"My gracious!" yelled Orv, as he made for the bank, "come along, Dan, or you'll be cooked."

"I don't want any telling about it," said the other, struggling on shore. "It this ain't a sell, I want to know."

Both of them were as red as lobsters, and felt as though they were parboiled. Fortunately, Iwam knew what to do.

He opened a piece of bearskin containing the kidney-fat, which was now reduced to a sort of oily paste, and bidding some of his people help him, proceeded to anoint the sufferers from head to foot, having accomplished which he hunted among the rocks, and returned with a quantity of fine white powder. When he had sprinkled this over the boys, all the heat vanished from their skins, and they felt no further inconvenience.

"We must take some of this stuff home," remarked Dan. "It's a splendid thing for scalds and burns."

That night they suffered badly for water, and all the next day traveled with their tongues hanging out of their mouths, but toward evening reached a temple hunted in a grove containing a beautiful spring.

"This isn't an Ainu arrangement," said Orville, as they quenched their thirst. "There's a lot of houses at the back of the main building; suppose we call upon the inhabitants?"

Leaving their attendants to drink their fill, the boys advanced to one of the dwellings, when a young bonze, who was seated in the veranda, rose and addressed them in English, saying:

"Good-evening."

At first they could scarcely credit their senses, and it was not until he had repeated his salutation that Orville replied:

"Good-evening. Where did you see an American before?"

"In Hakodate," he answered. "Won't you come in and take some tea?"

They followed him into a reception-hall, and after they had partaken of refreshments, learned that he had been loaned from the temple to the Japanese authorities in Hako-date, to whom, for several years, he had acted as interpreter.

"Where did you first acquire English?" demanded Dan. "You didn't pick it up in this place, did you?"

"Yes," he replied. "I had a book given me by one of our people—a volume containing both Japanese and English sentences, which took me several months to master. The Daimio of Oshima borrowed me of my uncle, and when I arrived at his castle procured a teacher for me, a runaway sailor, whose language was so bad that I refused to continue under his tuition. When the port became open to all nations I returned to my regular business, my relative being the head bonze of this temple. Now, having told you of myself, will you kindly inform me from whence you come? My name is Benkei—foreigners call me Ben Key. Won't you smoke?"

"No, thank you," they answered, and Orville, acting as spokesman, briefly sketched their history and adventures.

The young bonze listened attentively, and when the boy concluded, said:

"My uncle, who is the head of this establishment, is away at present, so cannot offer you his hospitality, but if you will accept mine I shall be delighted to entertain you. Take my advice, dismiss your dirty Ainos and stay here a week or two. In a few days from now there will be visited by thousands of people, and you will be quite interested in our ceremonies, some of which will be intensely amusing to you."

"Do you run a theatre?" innocently asked Dan.

"It's about the same," was the frank response. "I don't mind telling you that I have no faith in Buddhism. Any one who has lived four years with Americans and English loses all belief in idols. Pray, excuse me a moment, I am wanted."

"Now," said Orville, "shall we send the Ainos back?"

"Yes," replied the other; "we shall learn a deal from this young man; he seems real clever."

When Benkei returned they accepted his offer, and summoning their guides, paid them, and told them they could go home, giving each one a leaf of an illustrated paper as a parting present.

"Would you mind writing a note for us to a Japanese friend?" inquired Orville.

"With pleasure," answered their new acquaintance.

The brothers told him what they wished to say, which he wrote in Japanese characters and read off as follows:

"Colonel Orville Fillamore and his brother, Major Daniel Fillamore, to Tomita Hosee, of Ha-to, greeting. We take pleasure in informing you of our arrival at the Buddhistic Temple of Ibari, and that the miserable Ainos, who have conducted us safely, are this day discharged and sent homeward with the various articles you so kindly loaned us, and for which we return our profuse thanks. We shall remain here for a few weeks the guest of Benkei, then embark for Hondo, always bearing in our hearts a pleasant memory of the fragrant spot inhabited by our good friend Tomita."

"Won't the old man think we are poking fun at him?" suggested Dan. "His place smells horribly of fish."

"He wouldn't like it unless you addressed him in this style," said Benkei. "Of course we don't always mean what we say in a letter."

"I couldn't you strike out the word miserable, in reference to the Ainos?" remarked Orville. "They are not half bad fellows."

"Tomita would consider it an insult if I did," answered the bonze.

"All right," said Dan; "you let it go as it is."

When the letter had been tied with silk it was placed in a lacquered box and handed to Iwam, after which the Ainos prostrated themselves before their late employers and knocked their foreheads on the ground, then rose, uttered a succession of grunts and salaams on their way homeward.

"I'd like to know why they made that noise," exclaimed Orv, turning to their host.

"Oh, it's their good-by greeting; they are mere animals, anyhow," was his rejoinder. "We Japanese have had a great deal of trouble with them; they are like your Indians, only worse."

"I don't know about that," merrily observed Dan. "Our reds scalp and torture, but these fellows only indulge in a little fighting with their swords."

"Ah," sighed Benkei, "it's too long a story to tell you. My ancestors have had no end of trouble with those Ainos."

The lads did not say anything, though they could scarcely refrain from smiling at this speech, their host evidently having Aino blood in his veins. It was like hearing a yellow man call an octoroon a nigger.

Benkei ordered his attendants to take his guests' baggage to their apartments, and when that was done, turned to the boys, saying in a whisper:

"Would you like a cocktail?"

"How?" they simultaneously gasped. "We do not drink anything of that sort."

"And you are Americans?" he queried. "Don't be afraid; I've got some genuine old rye here. If that does not suit you, I can give you beer, rum, or Holland gin."

"We are much obliged, Mr. Key," said Orville; "but, before we left home, promised our folks unless we were sick never to touch a stronger beverage than tea."

"I agree with you," he said. "I only keep those things for my foreign friends, who sometimes visit my retreat in the Ainos."

That night, when the brothers retired, and stretched themselves out on their mats to sleep, Dan remarked:

"Isn't Japan a wonderful country, Orv? Here we have a clergyman of the Buddhist persuasion who pokes fun at his religion, speaks our language like a native and offers us cocktails. I believe when we reach the main island we shall find telegraph poles, elevated railways, the telephone, and American civilization."

"If we do," significantly replied Orville, "our exploring will be busted."

CHAPTER XIII.

THE BROTHERS ARE ENTERTAINED BY MR. BENKEI.

AT daybreak the brothers heard a humming noise proceeding from the temple, and as their room was warm, they rose, dressed themselves and went out into the veranda, where they found Benkei, who was lounging in an American rocking-chair and reading a *New York Herald*.

"The mail is in," he remarked, after politely saluting them. "I suppose you do not expect any letters?"

"No," said Orville; "we told our folks to address us at Yedo. How did you get that paper?"

"I subscribe for it and *Leslie's Illustrated*," he replied. "If I didn't I should not know what was going on in the world."

The boys were so astonished to hear this that he noticed it, whereupon Dan told him they expected to find his countrymen totally different from himself.

"So they are, my dear fellows," he laughingly returned. "Although a bonze, I am a warm admirer of our radical party. If it were not for my family I'd quit this business and become a telegraph operator."

"What would be the good of that?" asked Orville.

"I could get a position under the Government," he said. "There's a line of telegraph from Hakodate right across the main island, with branches all over the place and down to Nagasaki. Why do you look so terribly disappointed?"

"Well, the truth is," blurted out Dan, "we've been reading a book called 'The Capital of the Tycoon,' written by Sir Rutherford Alcock, in which he describes your country as a most marvelous place, while your people are depicted as dressed in quaint robes, living in magnificent castles, and chiefly occupied in cutting up foreigners with their swords."

Benkei laughed heartily at this, then observed:

"Oh, I've read that book. Since it was written great changes have taken place in our Empire, and many of our folks have cast aside their old customs and dresses and become Americanised. The Emperor has cleared out nearly all the Buddhist temples in the other islands, and has turned them into barracks and schools; by-and-by he will send his soldiers up here and my uncle and his assistants will have to hop."

"What's that noise we hear?" inquired Orv, pointing toward the temple.

"It's our fellows saying their prayers," he answered. "Would you like to go in and see them?"

"Yes," said the boys, "we would."

Benkei rose, adjusted the girdle of his silken garments, and advanced to a side-door, then, opening it, motioned his friends to enter.

At first, coming out of the light, they could scarcely discern the objects within, but presently saw a magnificent platform, crowded with gorgeous lacquered shrines, containing gilded images, while from the highly ornamented ceiling hung beautiful lanterns, the whole building being perfumed with incense, clouds of which arose from burners placed before each altar.

"Where are the bonzes?" whispered Dan to their guide.

Benkei pointed to the matted floor, in front of the platform, and his friends beheld about three hundred figures, trussed up like fowls, with their foreheads pressed to the ground, in the act of adoring Buddha.

While the boys were watching these, a bonze upon the raised space sounded a pair of clappers, then the worshipers half arose, and, clasping their hands, murmured:

"*Oh-mi-to-fu!*" (Oh, great Buddha), which they repeated at regular intervals in a solemn and impressive manner.

The splendor of the decorations completely astonished the young sailors, and, upon reaching a quiet part of the building they asked their friend how such a magnificent temple became erected in that out-of-the-way spot, and why so many young men were kept there.

"Oh," he cheerfully answered, "in the old time a Buddhist missionary was killed here by the Ainos, so our people erected this temple to his memory. In a little while the Emperor will clear out all that trash," indicating the idols and shrines. "As to the number of bonzes just wait until the festivals begin and you'll see there won't be one too many. We sometimes have twenty thousand visitors here in a week, and make piles of money writing prayers for them."

"What do they do with the latter?" innocently asked Dan.

"They chew them up and throw them at the gods," said Benkei, with a grin. "If one of our people wants anything, he gets us to write his request on a slip of paper, which he masticates and pitches at his favorite image. That's why some of the idols have wire-screens before them. The stupid folks think if their spit-balls stick on the figure or screens that Buddha will grant their request."

"I must be comical to see them taking shots at their gods in that style," chuckled Orville.

"Yes, it is immensely funny," said Benkei. "Some of the old women who can't throw well get quite awfully angry, and have to be sent out of the temple. I'm sick of the whole business, and hope the Emperor will soon stop it."

"Is he a Christian?" said Dan, who was quite shocked with the cool manner in which their friend referred to his countrymen's idolatry.

"No, he's not Benkei. "He's a Shinto."

"What's that?" demanded Orville.

"Oh, it's a very ancient faith," gravely replied their companion. "There's no nonsense about it. Are you aware that Christianity is officially forbidden in this country? In all the great highways you will see notices prohibiting us from becoming converts, spite of which there are a great number of Christians in the empire, and you will find lots of missionaries at Yedo."

As he was speaking the humming noise of the chanting ceased, and the worshipers came laughing and chattering to where the boys stood, so Benkei introduced the latter to them.

They were of all ages, and were dressed in robes of yellow, which, combined with their shaven heads, gave them a very odious appearance. Some spoke English quite fairly, and others seemed to understand such sentences as "Good-morning" and "All right."

"We are going to partake of our first meal," whispered Benkei to his guests. "Will you join us, or would you prefer to be served alone? We neither eat meat nor fish."

The lads signified their desire to mix with their new acquaintances, and following the party, entered a large hall, on the floor of which were hundreds of trays containing boiled rice and little bowls of a dark liquid.

In a few moments Orville and Dan were seated, and when the bonzes had chanted their prayer every one began to eat.

Imagining the liquid was cold tea, Orville raised his bowl to his lips and drained its contents, immediately experiencing a peculiar sensation, and finding that he had swallowed what they called soy—a sort of catsup made of fermented beans, which is as salt as brine.

"My goodness!" he moaned to his brother; "I've done it! That stuff is burning a hole in my interior."

Benkei heard this, and seeing the empty vessel, told Orville not to be afraid, as it would give him an appetite, and bade him eat his rice to absorb the sauce; adding, with a sly twinkle:

"That's nothing to what I suffered on board an American man-of-war. I drank the contents of a cruet of Chili vinegar."

After they had dispatched the first course, tea was served; then the bonzes lighted their pipes and smoked, and Benkei, giving a signal to his friends, led the way to his own rooms, where they found a pile of American newspapers.

"Don't it seem natural?" said Dan; "here's a report of a baseball match played only a few weeks ago in Cincinnati."

"Do you understand the game?" inquired their host.

"Rather," they chorused. "We were the champions of the Cooperstown Club."

"Could you teach me?" asked Benkie. "If I can't get a government position as a telegraph-operator, I might become a professor of baseball playing. All my countrymen who go to America learn it, and it is getting to be quite a fashionable amusement on the main island."

"But we can't teach one person," said Orv; "besides, you couldn't play in those long petticoats."

"Certainly not," he answered; "some of our bonzes are tailors, and can make any sort of suit you want. You'll find more pupils than you are able to teach. I tell you there are some smart fellows among our crowd, and they all anticipate losing their positions, and desire to learn another trade. We'll call a meeting this afternoon, and you can pick out your men. There's a beautiful bat at the back of this grove, and we will have it laid in any style you like."

The speaker and his friends boys laugh; it seemed so comical to have a Japanese bonze talk like a schoolboy.

That morning they spent in perusing the papers, and after the midday meal of rice, the yellow-robed gentlemen were summoned into a large reception-room.

"My goodness!" whispered Dan to Orv; "won't they make comical teams! We shall have to call them the Baldheads."

CHAPTER XIV.

A NOVEL BASEBALL CLUB.

IT was very amusing to witness the animation of the bonzes, who, as they squatted upon the matted-floor, chatted merrily in their own language, smoked, and awaited what Benkei had to communicate, the substance of his speech, which was in Japanese, being as follows:

"Reverend brothers, you are all aware the Mikado has decided upon abolishing our temples, and like me, feel it important to be learning some other profession. It's all right enough for old men, such as my uncle, to fight against fate, but we are not so foolish. You have often heard me speak of the American game of baseball, by which a great many gentlemen make a handsome living? Now I propose we place ourselves under the instruction of Colonel Orville and Major Dan Fillamore, so that when the soldiers come to seize the temple we shall have a profession at our finger's ends. What do you think of my idea?"

Quite an animated discussion followed, during which some of the bonzes spoke for the plan and others against it, the latter persistently remarking:

"It won't do for us all to learn the same business and overstock the market."

"I never thought of that," said their leader. "Let those who wish to be instructed in the noble art of baseball stand up and form two parties."

While this was being done Benkei translated his speech to the brothers, whereupon Orville asked:

"See here, why do you call us colonel and major?"

"I thought it was your custom thus to address important people," he innocently replied. "All the Americans I met in Hako-date bore one of those titles."

"Yes, our countrymen have a weakness in that direction," answered Orv; "but we prefer our simple names."

"All right," said their friend; then, turning to the bonzes who had risen, requested them to follow him to his apartment.

When they were seated he took down their names, ages and weights, and that done, asked the boys to select their team.

Dan chose nine strong-looking fellows, to whom he gave the name of "The Danites," and Orville picked out a similar number, which he called the "White Head Nine;" then proceeded to give a description of the game, which was translated by Benkei, who produced a book on the sport, and requested their instructor to explain how the various articles used in it were fashioned.

"I never thought of that," said Dan, glancing at the manual. "Where are we going to get our bats and balls?"

"The temple carpenters will make the former and we can manufacture the latter," said Benkei, and pointing to a costume in the book, he inquired: "Now, what colors will you choose for your team?"

Orville reflected a moment, after which he answered:

"The White Heads will wear white caps, blue and white shirts, blue and white belts, scarlet knickerbockers, yellow stockings and white shoes."

"Excuse me," whispered Benkei, "if you put them in shoes and stockings they won't be able to move. Take my advice and let them dress as our athletes do."

"How is that?" inquired Dan.

"They wear a very simple arrangement," gravely replied the young bonze. "A cloth round the waist and a towel tied tightly about the forehead, and therefore have nothing to incommode their limbs."

"Yes," chuckled Orv, "that's like the fishermen's harness up in Hako. Such an useless uniform as that wouldn't be allowed on any base-ball ground in the United States. How will they do if they get a crack with the ball?"

"None of us are thin-skinned," grinned their host, lighting a fresh pipe. "We often wrestle among ourselves, and no one ever complains of bruises."

"Why do they want to wear a towel round their heads?" demanded Dan. "I notice all the working people do."

"To keep the perspiration out of their eyes," said Benkei. "The hair on your scalps carries off the sweat, but if you shaved your heads, as we do, the moisture would run down into your eyes and make you blind."

"That's a wrinkle," said Orville, with a nod. "See here, Dan, I vote we adopt the national harness. My team to wear blue and yours red. It will save a tailor's bill."

Upon this decision being announced, the nines expressed the most lively satisfaction, and retired in order to prepare themselves for the initial season, which was to be given that evening.

At first the pupils were rather clumsy; however, they soon picked up the game, and the boys saw they would quickly master it.

Every morning and afternoon Benkei taught his guests to speak Japanese, and, after the evening ceremonies, the brothers instructed their teams in the national game.

It was a comical sight to see the bald-headed players rushing about the field, and their teachers often had to stop in order to indulge in a good laugh.

One evening, as they were in full practice, a foreigner, bearing an organ on his back, came in sight, and, halting on the edge of the ground, uncovered his instrument and began to play, the result being a total inattention to the game, noticing which, Orville advanced to the operator and said:

"See here,' mister, we don't want any of your noise; so just trot off."

"Vat you spick?" cried the Italian. "Me got so much right in dis ya country as you Yankee. Me come from Hako-date to play musica at de festival."

"That isn't till next week," said the boy. "You just skip out of this; you are interrupting my pupils."

"Ah, ha! You playa bass-balls," shrieked the infuriated grinder. "S'pose you tink me never liva in New Yorka?"

"Here, Mr. Benkei," cried Orv, "will you kindly send some of your attendants and have this fellow marched off?"

He referred to a number of half-tamed Ainos, employed as guards to the temple, muscular fellows, armed with swords, who were ready to do anything they were told. The young bonze summoned several of these men and ordered them to remove the intruder, then said to his friends:

"This is the first music-box that has come up here. During our festival we have all sorts of shows, and last year a man brought a Punch and Judy and made so much money that he injured our receipts. The people called it the *Lobster-claw god*, and wanted us to buy it."

"Did they throw spitballs at it?" said Dan, with a grin.

"Yes," answered Benkei, chuckling at the remembrance; "one man did so and hit Punch in the eye, whereupon the owner of the show came from under the screen and, ascertaining who had thrown the prayer, pummeled the offender, and effectually stopped any more petitions being sent in that way."

While he was speaking, the Italian, who had resolutely folded his arms and defied the Ainos to touch him, suddenly advanced, and, shaking his fist at the brothers, passionately exclaimed:

"Looka here, you Yanka Doodla, me go Hako-date—me fixa you!" then, shaking his fist at them, returned to his instrument, shouldered it and went off, saying: "All rights, all rights, me fixa you!"

"How far is it to Hako-date?" inquired Dan.

"It's about ten miles to Mororan and then there's a trip by boat. He'll get there the day after to-morrow."

"I know what he'll do," said Orville. "He'll go and tell the American Consul that two runaway sailors are up here."

"The consul won't interfere with you," said Benkei. "You didn't leave a ship in Hako-date Harbor, and no one will have made a complaint."

"I don't care if they do," observed Dan. "Still, I wish Orv hadn't spoken so roughly to that man."

The next morning people began to arrive from all parts of the island, and to camp in the baseball ground and the grove around the temple, so the players' practice was stopped, and the brothers spent their time in studying Japanese.

Among the multitude were a large number of Ainos, who brought quantities of sulphur and copper ore as offerings to the image.

"I thought you didn't take any stock in those hairy men?" remarked Orville to their host.

"We take all they give us in the shape of tribute," responded Benkei. "They do a good business in selling fuel to the visitors, and we expect to be paid for granting them the privilege."

On the afternoon before the opening of the festivities, Dan and Orville were seated in their friend's room reading the New York papers, when they saw a party of foreigners ride up to the temple.

"Who can they be?" murmured Orv, rising and sliding back a small panel in the wall of the main building.

Dan followed him, and the brothers peeped into the edifice, where they beheld Captain Cheeseman, an American official, and a body of native policemen, armed to the teeth.

The skipper was addressing Benkei, who looked as innocent as a baby.

"It's no use," said Cheeseman, drawing a revolver. "We've been informed that the runaways are here, and mean to take them back with us, dead or alive." (To be continued.)

"Orville and Dan" was commenced in No. 651

A NEW BRAND OF CHAMPAGNE AND A CATASTROPHE AT A CONVIVIAL PARTY.

A NEW BRAND OF CHAMPAGNE AND A CATASTROPHE.

RAILROAD men are generally wide-awake, jolly chaps, who take life on the fly, and enjoy a good joke. Mr. H. S. Henderson, the popular train-dispatcher of the Erie, and the dispatcher of considerable game along the line of the road, is a favorite with the boys. Next to Dan Cooper, he is the safest man and best shot on the Erie staff. He has taken charge of several hunting-parties, and always brought them back safe. He places his men a mile apart, so there is no danger of their shooting each other. For this and other sagacious qualities Mr. Henderson was presented with a fine gun, inclosed in a morocco case, with his monogram on the cover. The presentation was made by the Hon. Reuben Carr, in a felicitious speech. Mr. Henderson responded by saying that he felt as proud as Claude Melnotte did on showing his prize to his mother; and imitating the voice of a great tragedian, he ejaculated:

"Is it not a beautiful g-u-n, boys?"

On the boys answering in the affirmative Mr. Henderson invited them to step into a restaurant near by and partake of some refreshments; and thereby hung several tales.

Although the donors had endeavored to keep the matter a secret, it had leaked out, and Mr. Henderson had ordered a basket of wine to be sent to the restaurant. As the Northern and Erie men are apt to play practical jokes, he had the basket securely nailed up in a box. On arriving at the restaurant the party were shown into a large, well-furnished private parlor. The box lay on a long table in the centre of the room. Surrounding the box were goblets, wine-glasses and decanters. Dan Cooper was selected to open the box.

With a comical look he seized a hammer and chisel and pried off a wide board in the centre of the box. The boys stood around expectant, glasses in hand. Dan gave a tremendous knock on the box, when out popped two fierce cats. Dan Cooper's Mexican dog was with him. The dog went for the cats. The glassware was knocked over. Henderson rushed for the box. The wine-basket was empty.

"I'll give a hundred dollars to find out who stole my wine!" shouted Henderson.

"Call off your dog, Dan Cooper!" yelled Bill Taylor; "the confounded cats are tearing my two hundred-dollar lace curtains all to pieces."

"Send for Zimmerman's dog, he'll gobble the whole lot of them!" said Berdan, the religious reporter of the *Paterson Guardian*.

"Show us the man that captured the wine!" yelled Frank Flanders, Steve Berden and Hankey Lapton.

Dan Cooper's Mexican dog soon captured the cats, with the loss of the only bunch of hair he had left near the tail.

A BIG CATCH.—A SNAKE IN THE WEB OF A CONNECTICUT SPIDER.

A BIG CATCH.

IN Nelson Williams's cellar, in Danielsonville, Ct., a spider had prepared his web between a barrel and tub, and there, suspended from the ground, hung a small snake about ten or eleven inches in length. The thread of the web had been ingeniously twisted or woven around the tail of the unfortunate reptile, and it was evident that he had been drawn up from the ground. The spider seemed anxiously watching his squirming victim from one corner of the web, probably waiting for life to become extinct. The snake remained in this precarious attitude for thirty-six hours, and then escaped.

A TENDER-HEARTED WARRIOR.

CAPTAIN C., in writing from his camp on the frontier, says: "Just now I have a world of trouble on my hands, for a little bird has built a nest on a small projection over my door, and has raised five bouncing babes, and they will keep tumbling out of bed, and I have to jump up, whatever I am doing, many times a day, and put them back, or the dogs or cats would make a meal of them. One of them fell out to-day on my big dog Mack's back and fastened his claws in his long hair. Away went Mack, and I after him in full chase; you may imagine I had some trouble in seeing the little woolly-head half buried in the dog's glossy coat. I give the mother plenty to eat, so that she might get them strong and off my hands."

THE DISTRICT TELEGRAPH BOYS.

THE CURIOUS USES TO WHICH MESSENGER-BOYS ARE PUT.

EACH boy is thoroughly posted about the different kinds of tickets used in the system. The red ticket for cash, the white and yellow ticket for burglar and fire-alarm, the white or subscriber's ticket, the extra ticket to non-subscribers in offices, the reporter's ticket, the green or deadhead ticket, etc. He was also familiar with all kinds of "free service," as it is called, in which subscribers are charged nothing by the company, the remuneration being obtained from the express company, or stable or telegraph office, patronized.

As soon as the boy passes his examination satisfactorily in the training-school, he receives a new number on the regular force, is furnished also a hat, a uniform, and a pair of boots, rubber overalls, etc.

A record is then opened for him on the books of the company, and whenever he violates the rules or misbehaves, his misdeeds are written in this record. A system of marks is maintained to denote his average conduct, ranging from 1 (the best) to 13 or so (bad); he is fined for misconduct (either in money or overtime), and, finally, if incorrigible, he is dismissed.

As a class, the District Telegraph messengers are model boys. Toiling ten hours a day, and earning from $3 to $7 a week, they manage to be very useful, support themselves, and generally help to support others. Medals are given to the best boys in the District Telegraph service.

It is a fact that may be mentioned in passing, that rainy days are the harvests of the District Telegraph. A wet week will increase the average receipts of the business $500. It is also a fact that the vast majority of messages sent are for short distances and for small charges—ten and fifteen cents. When great trouble or considerable time is to be taken, people seem to prefer taking it for themselves; but "the little bothers" of life seem to be delegated in the metropolis to the District Telegraph.

On particular occasions messenger-boys can be "massed" into any particular locality. In a Wall Street panic hundreds of boys, say five from each office in the city, can be thrown into the street in five minutes by "unloading" from the office nearest Wall Street, then from the next nearest office, and so on.

Many curious uses have been found in the course of years for the messenger-boys. They are used as a species of two-legged express. On and about Thanksgiving Eve hundreds of messenger-boys are seen carrying a turkey or turkeys. On Christmas Eve they carry boxes and gifts—young and prosaic editions of Santa Claus. On New Year's Day they are deputed to pay their patrons calls by proxy, and leave their cards at houses where they do not choose to call in person.

Messenger-boys are also in demand now to escort young children, especially young girls, to school, and to escort them home again. They are even employed to watch babies and their nurses, and to notify a policeman if any stranger approaches them.

Patrolmen in the employ of the District Telegraph Company are of late years put to a peculiar use. The more gentlemanly of the force are often sent for to escort maiden ladies and elderly ladies to the opera or theatre. In these cases the men are furnished with white gloves and even dress coats, if desired and paid for. One evening recently there were eight ladies at six different theatres, including Booth's during the Kellogg opera season, whose escorts were furnished "to order."

Men, as well as women, employ escorts for various purposes. Many, in fact most of the men, too, who require the services of the messengers are strangers, who wish for guides to show them the "sights."

Cases are not unknown where a messenger has been summoned and sent in search of a missing husband, who was supposed to be at one of his favorite haunts. It is related that in one instance a messenger started out with a complete list of the places in which the truant was likely to be found, and at last discovered him. But he was unable to persuade him to come home, and so reported.

It is not an uncommon thing for a messenger to be sent home with an intoxicated person. In one instance of this kind, recently, a man was labeled and sent home, and when the messenger gave him up he obtained a receipt for "one drunken man."

The important application of the District Telegraph Company to the prevention of burglaries and fires can only be hinted at in the compass of this article.

These departments embrace a wide-spreading system of night and day-patrols intrusted to competent men, who watch, and are in their turn watched, and whose movements are recorded and guarded by electric communication.

An illustration of a night-patrol sending in a signal will give a general idea of the system.

AT LAST.

THE STORY OF A HUMAN JUDGMENT.

"SHE is a queer craft, truly, señor, and, what is more, she has at least one bit of queer history attached to her."

We were standing on the custom-house quay at Port Mahon—he, swarthy, handsome, eager-eyed and nervous of speech, a typical representative of the ragged, ease-loving, idleness-cursed rabble which throngs every city of the South of Europe, and has sent its stragglers even into the army of busy workers which populates the Balearic Islands.

The subject of his comment, an old brig with high bow and towering poop, elaborate with quaint carvings to which some tarnished remnant of its ancient gilding clung, rode easily at anchor amid a fleet of other smaller but similarly abandoned craft in the neglected corner of the harbor to which all such marine veterans were relegated until some enterprising speculator undertook to break them up.

"What is the history?" I asked.

"The señor would like to hear it?"

"I would, indeed."

My new friend deliberately drew a leaf of tobacco from his pocket, rolled it into a cigar, which he ignited from mine, blew a cloud of pungent smoke out in the direction of the brig, and, seating himself on one of the stone mooring-posts, with his eyes fixed upon the vessel, said:

"Then you shall."

This is the story, as closely as I can recollect it, word for word:

Fifteen years ago two people who loved one another more than well lived at the farmhouse of the Finca Suberney in the Barranco (valley) de Algandar.

One was a girl of the farm, a creature of beauty as pure and sweet as our Summer sky, and sylvit as loving and wayward as the wind that blows from the orange gardens of Alayor.

The other, a lad of twenty, half-sailor, half-husbandman, but all true lover, had been anchored in the valley by the cable of his heart, and in her eyes forgotten too long for the free air and the salt spray.

They were man and wife, of but a few months' standing—man and wife, who went to labor in the lime groves and orange orchards side by side, and to whom, even with its weary work and common fare, the valley was a Paradise.

A TENDER-HEARTED WARRIOR.—CAPTAIN C., HIS LITTLE BIRDS, AND HIS BIG DOG MACK.

THE DISTRICT TELEGRAPH BOYS.—MESSENGER-BOYS EMPLOYED AS NURSES.

In the third month of their marriage a stranger appeared in the valley.

He was an Englishman, a traveler for pleasure, whose idle lounge brought him to the farm. The place pleased him; the people, as everywhere in the Islands, were hospitable, and proud of the presence of a guest; so he remained.

Days wore to weeks, weeks became months, and still he lingered. To-day it was an excursion among the shepherds of the desolate heights that hem the valley in; to-morrow a sturdy climb up the Monte del Tow, with its wind-worn convent ruins; again, a long ride through fields of golden grain and gardens of olives, fruit groves and fertile farms. Whatever the amusement was, he followed it up earnestly, as his countrymen always do.

At the end of his second month's stay one of these excursions brought him down the mountain side after nightfall, with a wild gale blowing from the north, sweeping over the bare hills with a bitter breath.

As he rode in the darkness his attention was attracted by a woman's shriek. It pierced the night, and the gale, sharp and clear, full of a wild appeal for aid, and pushing toward it without hesitation, he found himself before one of those high, pyramidal structures of loose stones in which the Balearic shepherds shelter their sheep.

A fire was burning under the lee of this stall, and by its light he saw a woman—a girl, rather—struggling in the arms of a burly, skin-clad ruffian, while two others looked on with savage laughter.

To ride one of these down, tell the other to the earth, and with a fierce cut of his whip across his face compel the third to release his prey, was the work of as little time as it takes to tell it, and before the shepherds had recovered from their stupefaction, the creator of it had cantered out of reach of the volley of stones they sent after him, clasping the rescued girl to his breast.

Her story was soon told. She was the young bride of the farm, and on her way home from another *Accíendo* had been stopped by the half-savage shepherds, as he had seen; so, riding and talking, they came to the door of the house where he was an honored guest and she a drudge.

Great as the social difference between them was, her gratitude and his admiration bridged it over.

They met often, he always lightly kind, lavish, on his return from an occasional visit to town, with trifling gifts; she ever humbly proud of his notice, truly grateful for his munificence.

The husband saw this, too, and saw it with pride. Poor fool! he thought that the valley, where men honored women as their own mothers, wives and sisters, was the world.

At last the guest departed. Next day a peddler from Mercadel passed through the valley. It was afterward recollected that he held some speech with *her* while exhibiting his wares to the people of the farm.

Many other things were recollected, too, when, next night her place at table in the great kitchen was vacant; her side of her husband's bed was cold.

When the country all about was scoured only to discover, two days later, that a stranger and a country-girl had met in the market-place of Mercadel, and had gone together to Port Mahon.

Thither the husband followed them, mad with outraged love for her and deadly hatred for her destroyer.

He found them out. They had gone in the yacht which had brought the traveler to the island, and which had lain, waiting his pleasure, in the harbor. Whither? To France, some said. To France *he* therefore went by the first vessel that sailed.

It would not profit to tell of the long, fruitless search; to tell how, from place to place, always too late, he traversed all the Mediterranean coast until, one day, hearing of him and that he was now traveling alone, he knew that the inevitable had come to pass, and that she had been cast aside for a fresher face, a newer love.

Still searching, he found her at last.

Found her in a slum, surrounded by thieves, by vagrants, by women who were only women in name, dead, with a breathing babe on her rigid heart.

He took the child, and returning with it to his native place, put it among those who would care for it, and once more turned his restless face toward his goal. He carried a keen knife now, and had a use for it, sworn over her sacred grave.

It was dreary waiting, and sometimes his heart failed him.

The knife-blade, rubbed so often to kill the rust, was becoming thin.

It was becoming sharper, though, and he smiled each time he felt its constantly keener-growing edge.

"It will do its work all the better," he thought. "It will do it all the more surely, swiftly and fatally."

Sometimes, however, a fear would beset him. Might he not die? The very roving life his pursuit led him exposed him to perils which might balk his purpose.

"If I should die before I meet him!" he thought. "My God! if that should be!"

And at this thought his blood would turn to ice, and a strange horror come over him—a horror that would set his brain whirling, full of mad devils, that had all one single, mocking face, and seemed to jeer at him and taunt him with defeat—defeat!

In one of these despairing fits a letter reached him from what had been his home. It told him that the child—her child—was ill, and besought him to return at once.

With a curse upon the fortune that interrupted his purpose even for a few days, he set about to obey the letter, nevertheless. He was in Palermo. The old brig yonder lay there, bound for Majorca, and he shipped on her.

On the night of the third day out they came upon a boat, drifting, and in it a fainting man—the last survivor of a pleasure-yacht foundered in a gale two days before.

He was taken on board, revived and restored, and next day appeared on deck.

The husband saw him, and his heart gave a great leap.

The end, long sought by many laborious ways—through deadly peril, toil, trouble, bitter want, but always with undeviating faith, had come at last.

He and her murderer stood face to face!

His hand went at once to the knife in his bosom, but touched the priest's letter and fell again.

He must be cautious. He must not create any barrier to his seeing the sick little one among the Majorcan Hills.

His work could be done secretly and surely on some one of the days of the voyage yet to come.

Several of these days passed without bringing the opportunity.

At last it arrived.

One night the traveler and the captain sat late together over their wine. They were deep drinkers both, and the cabin-lamp saw many a bumper emptied before the carousers separated.

The man at the wheel, looking down through the open cabin-hatch, saw them rise at last, and heard the Englishman speak, pressing his temples between his hands.

"I have a headache," he said; "I will go on deck for a breath of what little fresh air there is."

It was hot; a breathless, heavy Summer night, oppressive with the intense warmth of a coming storm; but to the helmsman, as he felt for a knife in his bosom, all the furnaces of hell could not have brought such a fierce gust of flaming joy as turned his blood to fire and flashed a red mist in his eager eyes when a figure stepped upon the deck.

"At last! at last!"

"A close, hot night, my man," said the Englishman, in his easy, careless way, as he lounged slowly to the taffrail. "The sort of night to remind one of the tortures the damned undergo below."

The brig gave a lurch to leeward as the sea twisted her unmanned rudder.

A bright blade flashed redly in the light of the binnacle; one figure only stood where two had been, looking with blazing eyes into the black water where a circle of sharp ripples, fringed with phosphorescent fire, widened in fluss of pallid flame and vanished.

There had been a single deep groan, and a figure had plunged past the cabin window; a figure whose heart was cleft by a keen knife whose blade was worn so thin that it had snapped off, leaving only the handle in the executioner's hand.

At the same instant a star, the single one visible in the murky heavens, had fallen in a swift sweep of light.

Next day it was known that the traveler, so lately snatched from death upon it, had fallen overboard in a drunken fit and been swallowed by the sea.

"And the man? The child?" I asked, when my story-teller drew a long breath, wiped the perspiration from his drawn brow with the back of his hand, and tossed his finished cigar into the water. "Are they alive?"

"Faithless *padre mio*," said a voice behind me, and a slender, brown-skinned, free-limbed girl of thirteen, bare-headed, bare-footed, and clad in the picturesque peasant's dress of the country, stepped past me and smote my friend lightly on the face with a melon-leaf. "Is this your promise? Pardon me, señor, but you know not how false he is. He pledged me faithfully to take me to the theatre in the *plaza* to-day, and here I find him, as always, stretched at his ease out at that wretched old ship yonder. What can there be about it that he feasts his eyes upon it so, like a poor woman praying at a shrine?"

"It is a shrine! a monument!" said the storyteller, his eyes gleaming for a moment with savage joy, which softened to such a look of love as one rarely sees when he brushed the girl's heavy hair back from her forehead and kissed her.

"Señor, you ask me whether the man and the child of my story are alive. They are."

And hand in hand with the girl he went up the blazing sunlit quay, and vanished in the busy street.

THE DISTRICT TELEGRAPH BOYS.—A MESSENGER ESCORTING CHILDREN TO SCHOOL.

WILD ROSE AND VIOLET;

Or,

Fun at Mrs. Hawk's.

CHAPTER XLV.

MATRIMONIAL PROJECTS.

NOT long after the departure of Rose Royston and her uncle there was another arrival at Meditation House, in the person of Mrs. Flint Skinner, who had come to vent some of her spite on the head of her niece.

It was well for Violet that the spiteful lady had no suspicion that Violet Leigh and Victoria Luton (the rival who had frustrated her daughter's hopes) were identical persons.

At the termination of an interview which seemed an age to Violet, the upbraiding woman said to her sister's child:

"I wash my hands of you entirely for the future. Expect no help or countenance from me henceforth, for you will receive none. I shall provide you with a situation in which you will earn your own living, and after that I have done with you for ever."

And with these words the fierce lady took her leave, whilst poor Violet sat waiting and wondering—waiting for the return of her schoolfellow and dearest friend, that she might pour her sorrows into her sympathizing ear, and wondering what detained her so long, until the day waned and the evening drew on, and then Janet Sly informed her, with a malicious grin, that Miss Royston had gone away with her uncle, the captain, for good, and would never return to Meditation House again.

Violet could scarcely believe that Rose could have left her without a word of farewell, but as she did not again make her appearance, there seemed to be some truth in the housemaid's information, and the poor girl, utterly depressed and broken-hearted, and feeling herself deserted by all, sank down in her loneliness and wept the live-long night through, until, utterly worn out, she sank into a heavy slumber just as the first streaks of dawn were bidding the world awake.

During the ride home Rose candidly explained to her uncle the unjust severity which had caused her to escape from the irksome confinement of Meditation House, and to accept the invitation of her schoolfellow.

Captain Royston, delighted with the beauty and spirit of the bright-eyed girl before him, perfectly enjoyed the recital, and laughed heartily at the way in which she had, using his own nautical phraseology, "slipped her moorings and made a clean run of it."

There was one point, however, on which Rose's lips were sealed, and that was the fact of her engagement to Mr. Humphrey Tadpole.

The old sailor having now got her safely under his protecting wing, resolved in his own mind that the matrimonial project arranged between Captain John Targett and himself, for the son of the one and the niece of the other, should be carried out at the first convenient opportunity, and determined to lose no time in informing Rose of those intentions.

Accordingly, after arriving at his hotel, and luncheon having been discussed, he commenced the preliminaries.

"Come here, Rose, my darling," said the captain, with a kind, inviting smile.

Rose hastened to her uncle, and throwing her arms round his neck, kissed him.

"That's right!" exclaimed the gratified old gentleman. "That's hearty. That's what I like."

He kissed his niece in return with paternal fondness, and then said to her, earnestly:

"I think you will believe me, Rose, when I tell you that your welfare is dearer to me than anything else in the world."

"I do believe so, uncle," she replied, with equal earnestness.

"I am glad, very glad to hear that," continued Benjamin Royston; "since it will enable you to understand that what I am about to propose is for your advantage and your future happiness."

Rose opened her large brown eyes with curiosity, wondering what was coming.

The captain, having refreshed himself with a pinch of snuff, took his niece's hand in his and continued:

"You will comprehend me, then, my love, when I say that I am anxious to provide you with a protector who will look after you when I am gone."

"Are you going again, uncle?" exclaimed Rose, in a disappointed tone. "I understood you had made your last voyage!"

The old sailor smiled as he replied:

"You don't quite understand me, my child. I am not going to sea any more, and therefore, as far as my profession is concerned, I have, as you say, made my last voyage. But there is one more yet that I must take—that we must all take—but on which, in the course of nature, the old must expect to embark first."

Rose looked unusually serious at these words, and the captain proceeded:

"You know, my love, I shan't live for ever, and I want to leave you in safe anchorage before I depart."

The young girl looked wistfully at her relative, in whose bronzed, hale, ruddy features she could detect nothing but the most robust health, and said, reproachfully:

"Oh, don't talk so, uncle, dear; any one to hear you would suppose you were going to die directly, and you are quite a strong, hearty man. The idea of your dying!"

THE DISTRICT TELEGRAPH BOYS.—A MESSENGER TAKING HOME AN INTOXICATED PERSON.

THE DISTRICT TELEGRAPH BOYS.—PATROLMEN AS ESCORTS TO LADIES.

It was evident from the highly-flattered expression of the captain's face that he did not anticipate any such event immediately, and he said, in a tone of cheerful assurance:

"Well, well, my darling, I don't mean that I'm going positively to depart this life either to-day or to-morrow, but, it's as well to be prepared, you know, since neither the old nor young, the sick nor healthy, can predict the precise time when their summons will arrive. As far as I am concerned my only wish is to leave you in safety; and where can a young woman be so safe as in the arms of her husband?"

Rose Royston's lips parted slowly as she faintly echoed the word:

"Husband?"

"Yes, my child," continued her uncle; "I never married myself. The woman I loved died in the Spring-time of her life. I left her in the full bloom of youth and beauty; I returned to find the grass growing on her grave. I made a vow then that I would never fix my affection on another, and I have kept my word."

The old man wiped a tear from his eyes and went on:

"The desire of my heart is to see you married, my dear girl—well married, happily married."

His voice had faltered a little as he recalled the memory of his early love, but it recovered its usual firmness as he added:

"I suppose you would not object to be the wife of a brave, honest, handsome young fellow, who would love you as the apple of his eye, would you?"

Rose at once thought of her beloved Humphrey, who seemed to answer in himself all these conditions, and she replied with downcast eyes and in a low voice:

"N-o, uncle, I think not; if it's your wish."

"That's right; that's quite right, my love," exclaimed the old sailor, in a tone of great exhilaration; "I was sure that you reasoned upon this point; and now I must leave you for a few hours. You will remain here, and read and play the piano until I come back, and then I'll tell you something more."

Without another word of explanation, the captain, confident that Rose was perfectly prepared to accept any "brave, honest, handsome" young bridegroom he should present for her acceptance, started off in the highest spirits to Richmond, to acquaint his old friend, Jack Targent, with the good news.

Leaving, then, the worthy Benjamin on the road, let us hurry on before him and see what had previously transpired at Orion Villa, whither he was hastening.

The most important event that had occurred there was the return of the wanderer, Harry Targent, to his father's house after nine months' absence.

When Rose Royston had gone back to school he found society in general stale, flat, and unprofitable, and once more presented himself at Richmond.

The old captain's heart leaped within him for joy at sight of his beloved son, but he assumed a cold exterior, and received him as gruffly as possible.

"So, sir!" he exclaimed, as Harry stood before him, with perhaps a penitential expression. "Tired, I suppose, with rambling about, eh?"

"Just so, father," was the assenting reply.

"And so you have condescended to drop in here for a rest; for how long, may I ask?"

"I am not going away again, father."

"Am I to understand that you are not going away again?" he asked, emphatically.

"Yes, father."

The old gentleman's eyes glistened with unmistakable satisfaction as his son continued:

"Since I've been away I've been thinking that the roving life I've been leading for the last few years is rather unprofitable, and—a—in short, that it was time I gave it up and settled down at home."

"Are you really in earnest, Harry?" exclaimed the fond and delighted parent.

"I am, indeed, father," was his answer; "you'll see."

"My boy, my dear boy!" cried the captain, bobbing across the room, "you don't know how happy you make me. Then," he added, "there's my hand, Harry, my boy, and my heart in it. Not that it hasn't always been there for you, but I thought you didn't care to take it."

In a few moments father and son were on as good terms as if nothing in the world had occurred to make the least breach between them.

"The life of a bachelor is supposed to have its charms, but in my opinion it is a weary, cheerless state of existence at the best."

"I am inclined to think so too, father," readily assented Harry. "The fact is, my dear papa," his son explained, "my feelings and opinions are not what they were. They have undergone an entire revolution."

"Even with respect to marriage?" remarked Captain John.

"Decidedly," returned Harry, nervously; "and whereas I used to laugh at the idea of a man rushing into a state of voluntary bondage which I was pleased to stigmatize as tying himself to a woman's apron-strings, I now feel that matrimony is the only proper condition, and that a good, amiable, and loving wife is the greatest treasure in the world."

Captain Targent was so charmed with the enthusiasm of this speech that he tossed off a bumper of port, and positively shouted:

"Hurrah!"

At the same moment the gate-bell rang loudly, and Captain Royston was announced.

The *tête-à-tête* was thus interrupted, but Captain John had heard enough to feel quite certain his son would make no opposition to his wishes.

His friend Benjamin came bustling in, full of spirits and loaded with information.

In fact, the two old tars were both loaded to the muzzle, like a couple of twenty-four pounders, and it seemed a matter of difficulty to know which should be discharged first.

However, by degrees the satisfactory intelligence they had to communicate was mutually imparted, and a bottle of choice old port was placed upon the table, in which they mutually pledged each other, and drank success to their good intentions.

"Now, my dear Jack, everything is as it should be, and in proper trim, and I can speak to Rose at once," said Benjamin Royston, whose face glowed with satisfaction as he shook hands at parting.

"And I in the meantime will inform Harry, who, I know, will be delighted, of our projects," returned Captain Targent, "and to-morrow you must bring your niece and come and spend the day with me, and we will introduce the young couple to each other."

"So we will, my boy," cried Benjamin, heartily.

"Then I shall expect you."

"You may depend upon me if I am alive."

"Heaven keep you, then, with all my heart; and till to-morrow, farewell."

"Farewell!"

CHAPTER XLVI.

PERFECTLY HAPPY.

ROSE ROYSTON, after her uncle's departure, could not help pondering upon his words.

The idea of matrimony unassociated with Humphrey Tadpole (in spite of the eccentricity of the patronymic) never entered her head.

Her dismay, then, may be easily imagined when the captain on his return, having dined and lighted his cigar, proceeded in a most complacent and cheerful manner to unfold the designs contemplated by himself and his friend Captain John Targent for her happiness.

He went on glowingly, not observing the blank look of horror upon his listener's face.

"You see, my love, this match is the very thing for all of us," he said, exultingly. "Captain Targent is one of my oldest and dearest friends, and as for his son Harry, you'll be delighted with him, I know. We're going to spend the day at his house to-morrow, when I will introduce you to——"

The captain broke off with a sudden exclamation as he caught sight of Rose's pale, scared face.

"My dear child, what's the matter?" he exclaimed, starting up, quite alarmed. "What is it, my love? The cigar smoke is too much for you, perhaps, or——"

"Oh, no, no," returned Rose, "it isn't that."

"What is it, then?" entreated her uncle; "tell me, my love."

"I—I don't wish to leave you," she said, scarcely knowing what to reply.

"Nor are you going to leave me, my darling," said the captain, assuringly; "that's the beauty of this arrangement; for after you are married to Harry, I will go and live with you."

"Married to Harry!" stammered the poor girl, blushing in her embarrassment.

"You thought—you didn't think," repeated the captain, whose patience was beginning to give way. "I don't understand you. What do you mean?"

"Oh, don't be angry, dear uncle," exclaimed Rose, alarmed at the sudden sternness with which these questions were asked; "I only mean that—that—I can't marry the young gentleman you have named."

She threw her arms around the captain's neck as he spoke, and would have hid her flushed face on his shoulder, but the old man was annoyed at what he supposed to be his niece's perverseness, and he gravely put her from him.

"No!" he ejaculated, angrily; "I never countenance obstinacy, and since you refuse my old friend's son, whom you do not know, I wish to be informed why?"

Captain Benjamin fixed his eye so sternly upon his niece that she quite broke down under it and burst into tears.

The old sailor felt inclined to relent at once, but he repeated his question:

"Why?"

Rose, having no other excuse to offer but the right one, and not being an adept at dissimulation, sobbed out:

"Because I love some one else."

If the first refusal on Rose's part had perplexed the captain, this last confession knocked him off his legs entirely.

"Love — some — body — else?" he gasped, as though the information had taken away his breath; "who else?"

"Humphrey Tadpole," faltered the blushing girl, through her tears.

"Humphrey Tadpole!" shouted the old gentleman, thoroughly out of patience, and starting from his seat. "You have no Tadpoles here," he exclaimed, pacing up and down the room in a fury. "What d'ye mean?" he asked, stopping suddenly, "by loving a fellow with a name like that, eh?"

"I—I'm very sorry, uncle," sobbed poor Rose; "but I couldn't help it. He's a very nice young gentleman."

"Pshaw, nonsense—nice!" growled Benjamin Royston, quite savagely; "how can a Tadpole be nice? We should want an aquarium to put him in. Tadpole, indeed—ugh!"

The captain took a few more turns to and fro, and then stopping abruptly as before, he said:

"And pray in what stagnant pond did you discover this a—a—individual?"

"I didn't discover him in a pond at all. I met him when I was visiting."

"Ah, that all comes of running away from school," exclaimed the irritable commander, realizing for the first time the seriousness of the offense. "What right had you to run away? What business had Mrs. Hawk to give you the opportunity? I hold her responsible."

A few more hasty strides, and the captain, coming once more to a standstill, said:

"And so you really mean to tell me you love this —this—a—embryo frog, eh?"

"I love Mr. Humphrey Tadpole," she returned, quietly, with a slight twinge of indignation in her tone; "but as he can't help his name, I do not think you can visit his sorrow upon him, uncle."

Uncle uttered an impatient growl and inquired:

"And does he love you?"

"Yes; we both love one another."

"I won't have it!" shouted the captain, fiercely. "You must forget him—give him up. Write the very first thing to-morrow and tell him so."

"But I can't, uncle; it's perfectly impossible," protested the dismayed girl.

"Why is it impossible—why?" demanded Benjamin Royston.

"Because he has asked me to be his wife, and I promised I would be," returned Rose, desperately.

This was a complete break up to all the family arrangements.

He sternly refused to bid his niece good-night, and poor Rose went weeping to her bed.

Neither uncle nor niece slept as calmly as usual that night, and the next morning, immediately after breakfast, at which Rose did not appear, the carriage was ordered, and Captain Royston, in a terrible temper, drove off to Richmond to detail the disastrous intelligence.

"It's all over, Jack," he exclaimed, as he burst impetuously into the parlor on his arrival; "I've been speaking to my niece about this match, and would you believe it? the young jade has been engaging herself to somebody else."

"What, won't she marry my son?" cried Captain John.

"No, the minx."

"Ha, ha! that's good! that's very good!" shouted John Targent, laughing boisterously, till the tears ran down his cheeks.

"What do you mean by very good?" demanded Benjamin Royston.

"Why, I mean it's of no consequence, as it happens," his friend explained; "since, had your niece been ever so willing, my son refuses to marry her."

"The deuce he does?"

"Yes; it's a fact. The fellow's infatuated with a certain Miss Rebecca Rattle, or Rattle, or some such name, he has met with somewhere, and he expects me to receive her as a daughter-in-law with open arms. Very likely, isn't it?—there's a name, too, Rattle—ha, ha!"

"You're better off than I am in that respect," growled the captain; "ha, ha!" he laughed, spitefully; "would you believe it, Jack? my little girl has positively pledged herself to a Tadpole."

The two nautical old gentlemen, baffled, irritated and perplexed, stood glaring at each other, as red as a pair of turkey-cocks.

After a few moments they began to feel that the exhibition of such anger was unworthy two men whose hairs had grown white in their country's service, and they grew calmer.

"What is to be done?" asked Captain John, at length. "Are we to give up the affair as hopeless?"

"Certainly not," returned his comrade; "we must carry the matter with a strong hand. Now, that I am here, will be the time. But before we commence action, old friend, give me a bumper of port, for I declare I'm choking."

The wine was brought out, and the veterans, having fortified themselves with a glass or two, were prepared to make the attack.

"Where is your son?" asked Captain Royston; "send for him at once."

"Ah!" sighed the father, "he has not long left me in a furious passion, and if I sent for him now he'd be sure not to come. No, no, Ben; that won't do. If we want him, we must look for him. It's just possible if he's on the premises we may light upon him by accident."

Their search for a time was unavailing, when suddenly Captain Targent laid his hand upon his friend's arm and checked his progress.

"Hist!" he exclaimed, in a whisper.

"What now, Jack?" said Benjamin Royston.

"Why, there's my Harry!" returned Captain John; "and—eh?—why—what the—who's that with him?" he exclaimed, suddenly.

"Something of the feminine gender, or I'm much mistaken," growled Uncle Ben.

With this he peeped over a quickset hedge, and distinctly perceived his friend's son supporting a young girl, who appeared much depressed, and whose head reclined upon his shoulder, the attitude in which she stood preventing her from being seen.

"That is Miss Rebecca Grapple, I suppose," muttered John Targent, half to himself.

"If so, then now will be our time to bear down upon them," suggested Captain Royston. "We'll give the rebels each a broadside as shall——"

The speaker stopped suddenly as the young girl, raising her head at that moment, revealed to his astonished gaze the well-known features of his niece.

He remained riveted to the spot, with his eyes fixed upon the unexpected sight as though he doubted the evidence of his own senses.

"No, it's impossible; it can't be," he murmured, at length.

"What's impossible? What can't be?" asked his companion, struck with the vivid surprise that appeared depicted in his friend's countenance.

"Yes, it is—it is she herself; there's no doubt of it," exclaimed the captain, at length.

"Who is it?"

"Why, my niece, Rose," returned Benjamin Royston. "This is extraordinary, most extraordinary," he added, in a bewildered tone, and with a very perplexed look in his face. "I don't understand it at all. I never was good at solving mysteries, and hang me if I make anything out of this."

"They seem to understand one another very well, though, friend Ben," remarked John Targent, as he pointed to the young couple, just at the moment when Harry, little suspecting how narrowly his actions were being scrutinized, imprinted a loving kiss on Rose's pale cheek.

"Why, the young rascal's kissing her!" exclaimed Captain Royston, with sudden fierceness; "kissing her, and yet he won't marry her. There's something wrong, very wrong, Jack; depend upon it."

Benjamin Royston took a hasty step forward, but his old friend restrained him.

"If there is anything wrong, old comrade," remarked the sailor, quietly, "it's you one being violent about it now. See, he is leading her away down the walk; let us follow and hear what they say. We shall probably arrive at the truth by so doing."

How she came here at all is a mystery to me," murmured Captain Royston.

The mystery was very quickly solved.

Rose, although ignorant of her lover's real name, had casually heard that he lived at Orion Villa, Richmond.

Accordingly, having written a few lines in pencil, begging her uncle to excuse her presence at lunch, she started off at once, on the chance of being able to find Humphrey, that she might inform him of what had transpired.

Harry Targent, happening to look over the hedge with a half-formed intention of once more taking his departure by that way, the first object that presented itself to his view was Rose Royston herself on the other side.

A loose paling was sufficient to admit her, and she had just preluded her anxious recital by a vehement flood of tears when Captain Targent caught sight of the lovers.

Harry had now conducted his beloved to a very snug and unfrequented spot in the garden, and toward this his father and Captain Royston crept cautiously.

They were within a few feet of the young couple, and could not only hear every word they uttered distinctly, but see them through the interstices of the boughs.

"And now, darling, what has happened?" asked Harry, in a tone of great sympathy.

"My uncle won't let me marry you," cried Rose, with a burst of the most sincere grief.

"Umph!" ejaculated Harry, bitterly; "we both seem to be under the same species of interdict, for my father refuses me permission to marry you."

"Isn't it cruel, dear?" sobbed Rose.

"It's all humbug, darling," returned her lover, impetuously; "but never mind, don't cry, love," he added, soothingly; "there is no need for tears, for I'm resolved to marry you in spite of everybody."

And in the intensity of his determination he folded his fair young intended to his bosom.

It is needless to say that this was in the highest degree satisfactory, at the same time it was utterly incomprehensible to the elderly nautical gentlemen who were listening.

"Why, Jack," whispered Captain Royston, in complete bewilderment, "what do they mean?"

In reply to which Jack could only shake his head hopelessly, and protest that he was "aground, and all in a fog."

They had little time, however, for wonderment, for the next moment Harry continued:

"And pray, darling, what objection does your confounded—I beg your pardon, I mean respected uncle—make to our union?"

"He insists on my marrying some one else," replied Rose, mournfully.

"Just my case again," burst out Harry, petulantly; "the governor, thinking as most governors do, to be very clever in the arrangement of his son's affairs, has found out a wife for me whom he expects me to accept."

Rose clasped her hands over the arm of her lover, and looked up into his face with a tearful and an appealing gaze. (To be continued.)

"Wild Rose and Violet" was commenced in No. 656.

"MOTHER'S FOOL."

"'TIS plain to me," said the farmer's wife,
"These boys will make their mark in life;
They never were made to handle a hoe,
And at once to college they ought to go.
Yes, John and Henry, 'tis clear to me,
Great men in this world are sure to be;
But Tom, he's little above a fool—
So John and Henry must go to school."

"Now, really, wife," quoth Farmer Brown,
As he sets his mug of cider down,
"Tom does more work in a day for me
Than both of his brothers do in three.
Book-learnin' will never plant beans or corn,
Nor hoe potatoes, sure as you're born—
Nor mend a rood of a broken fence;
For my part, give me common sense."

But his wife the roost was bound to rule,
And so "the boys" were sent to school;
While Tom, of course, was left behind,
For his mother said he had no mind.

Five years at school the students spent,
Then each one into business went.
John learned to play the flute and fiddle,
And parted his hair (of course) in the middle;
Though his brother looked rather higher than he
And hung out his shingle—"H. Brown, M.D."
Meanwhile, at home, their brother Tom
Had taken a notion into his head.
Though he said not a word, but trimmed his trees,
And hoed his corn and sowed his peas.

But somehow, either by "hook or crook,"
He managed to read full many a book.
Well, the war broke out, and "Captain Tom"
To battle a hundred soldiers led,
And when the enemy's flag went down,
Came marching home as "General Brown."

But he went to work on the farm again,
Planted his corn and sowed his grain,
Repaired the house and broken fence,
And people said he had "common sense."
Now, common sense was rather rare,
And the State House needed a portion there,
So our "family dunce" moved into town,
And people called him "Governor Brown."
And his brothers that went to the city school,
Came home to live with "mother's fool."

THE LENGTH OF DAYS.

AT London and Beemen the longest day has sixteen hours.

At Stockholm (Sweden), and Dantzig (Prussia), the longest day has seventeen hours, and the shortest seven hours.

At St. Petersburg (Russia), and Tobolsk (Siberia, the longest day has nineteen hours, and the shortest five hours.

At Torneo (Finland), the longest day is twenty-one and a half hours, and the shortest two and a half hours.

At Wardhuys (Norway), the day lasts from May 21st to July 25th without interruption, and at Spitzbergen the longest day is three and a half months.

A BOY'S LEISURE HOURS.

WHAT a boy does with his leisure hours is most important; what he gets in school is mainly drill or exercise; it is a gymnasium to him; he must eat elsewhere. What he does with his spare hours determines his destiny. Suppose he reads history every day, or scientific books; in the course of a few years he becomes learned. It matters very little what he undertakes—Latin, Greek, Hebrew, Sanskrit, all difficulties disappear if he uses his spare time on them.

A boy was employed in a lawyer's office, and had the daily paper to amuse himself with. He commenced to study French, and at that little desk became a finest reader and writer of the French language. He accomplished this by laying aside the newspaper and taking up something not so amusing but far more profitable.

A coachman was often obliged to wait long hours while his mistress made calls. He determined to improve the time; he found a small volume con-

taining the Eclogues of Virgil, but could not read it and so purchased a Latin grammar. Day by day he studied this, and finally mastered all its intricacies. His mistress came behind him one day as he stood by the horses waiting for her, and asked him what he was so intently reading.

"Only a bit of Virgil, my lady."

"What, do you read Latin?"

"A little, my lady."

She mentioned this to her husband, who, insisted that David should have a teacher to instruct him. In a few years he became a learned man, and was a useful and loved minister in Scotland.

A boy was hired to open and shut the gates to let the teams out of an iron mine. He sat on a log all day by the side of the gate. Sometimes an hour would pass before the teams came, and this he employed so well that there was scarcely any fact in history that escaped his attention. He began with a little book on English history that he found in the road; having learned that thoroughly, he borrowed of a minister Goldsmith's History of Greece. This good man became greatly interested in him, and loaned him books, and was often seen sitting by him on the log conversing with him about the people of ancient times.

WANDERING WILLIE;

Or,

Lost in the Bush.

The Adventures of a Missionary's Son in the Wilds of Africa.

CHAPTER IX.

THE NEW WIFE.

SEEING that King Sankorra was determined for once in his life to have his own way, Benguela did not interfere.

He would gladly, and without any compunction, have consigned Birdie Merlin to the waters of the boiling well, but he was willing to wait.

His time would come.

Accordingly, with a bad grace which all his efforts did not suffice to conceal, he bowed his head before the king.

"Oh, Sankorra," he exclaimed, "if you see fit to spare the life of this Christian girl and take her to your harem, it is you who is provoking the spirits, and I hope sincerely that no disaster will happen to the kingdom."

"I will risk it," replied the king. "Let her be taken to my house at once."

Birdie was immediately unbound, and two priests detailed to conduct her home.

"See that no harm befalls her," continued Sankorra. "If anything happens to her your heads shall answer for it."

Birdie was taken away, walking like one in a dream, for she could scarcely believe in her good fortune.

The revulsion of feeling was so great that she almost fainted with excess of joy.

The harem of the king was a spacious building or congeries of huts, surrounded by a high palisade.

By immemorial custom the king was only allowed to have a certain number of wives.

This number was fixed at seventy-five.

When his majesty saw fit to add to his stock he had to kill one of the wives.

The unfortunate women drew lots, and the one who took the fatal number was condemned to death.

It may be easily imagined that the arrival of a new wife created the greatest excitement in the harem.

The women wept and wrung their hands, or crouched in corners, not knowing which would be selected as a victim.

Fifteen negro slaves were in charge of the harem, the head one being named Issa.

She had supreme power.

Issa was a hideous negress, and very cruel to those whom she disliked.

The reigning favorite could alone afford to defy her, but when she in her turn was supplanted by a new face, as was always the case in time, Issa had her revenge, and heaped blows and insults on the forgotten beauty.

Birdie had heard the king say that she should be his wife, and knew not how to escape from the situation in which she was placed.

She determined, however, to tell the king, when an opportunity occurred, that she could not marry him, and that she would rather die than do so.

When the harem was reached, she was handed over to Issa, who took charge of her at the gate.

She was first conducted to a bath and anointed with palm-oil, and sweet-smelling herbs were pressed upon her skin, after which she was given a loose sack made of muslin, which the king had bought from traders.

Her hair was allowed to hang loosely down her back, and she looked very pretty and fascinating.

Being, as we have already said, slightly acquainted with the language of the Kasonga tribe, she was enabled to converse with Issa, who showed her more respect than she bestowed upon any of the other women.

Being struck with astonishment at the attitude of grief and despair which the ladies of the harem exhibited she inquired the reason, and was horrified to hear of the odious custom which condemned one wife to death on the arrival of another.

She was the innocent cause of this sacrifice, and that fact added to her grief.

In order to put the miserable wretches out of the suspense from which they were suffering, Issa determined to draw lots at once.

Seventy-five pieces of wood were put in a basket, one being shorter than the others, which were all of a uniform length.

The woman who drew the short one had to die.

Issa held up the basket so that no one could see into it, and raising their arms one by one, the women drew the lots.

When all were supplied the sticks were measured, and a girl scarcely fifteen years of age was found to be the victim.

Her face at once assumed an attitude of stony despair.

Issa immediately took her into an open courtyard and fastened her to a stake.

The other inmates of the harem armed themselves with small spears, like javelins, called assegais.

Ranging themselves in a circle around the poor wretch, they awaited the signal from Issa to cast the assegais at the doomed girl.

Birdie was horrified, for she promptly comprehended the terrible death the unhappy creature was to die.

"Come!" said Issa; "why do you not take an assegai like the rest?"

She pointed to a heap of spears lying in a corner of the yard.

"No, no; do not ask me!" replied Birdie.

"It is the custom. Perhaps some day it may be your fate."

"I cannot do it."

Issa shrugged her shoulders.

"Your abstaining," she exclaimed, "will not save her. Come! it is sport."

"Sport! to kill a fellow-creature in this way! Oh! what a land this is, where life is held so cheap, and all is blood! 'Let me implore you to spare her.'"

Issa laughed harshly.

"You are a fool!" she cried. "The king himself could not save her."

Scarcely knowing why she did so, Birdie sprang forward and clasped her arms round the shivering girl.

She acted on an irresistible impulse, which she could neither define nor disobey.

"Strike at her through me!" she exclaimed.

A murmur of involuntary admiration broke from the crowd of women.

They knew what assegais is.

It was impossible to help being struck by this heroic action.

All eyes were turned upon Issa to see what she would do in this novel emergency.

Never before had such a daring deed occurred in the memory of the oldest inhabitant of the harem, and some of them were gray and bent with years.

The hideous old negress who governed these women as if they were children and she their schoolmistress, became convulsed with rage.

Seizing a raw-hide whip she advanced to the stake.

"Back," she cried, "or I will lay the flesh off your bones!"

"Strike!" said Birdie. "I am not afraid when I am doing my duty."

The negress hesitated.

Birdie was a new importation, and Sankorra would not be pleased to find her body disfigured with the cruel lashes of the whip.

She was in a dilemma.

Twice she raised the thong and lowered it, hesitating how to act.

At this moment the king himself entered the courtyard.

"What is this?" he demanded.

At the sight of the king all the women fell on their knees, with the exception of Issa.

It was her privilege, in virtue of her high office, to stand before his majesty.

"Oh, king!" she said, "we have selected a victim by lot, as is usual when a new-comer arrives in the harem. But this white slave will not permit us to use our assagais."

The king frowned.

"This to Bolly?" he replied.

"I am simply preventing a murder," Birdie replied.

"By the unwritten law of the land," replied Sankorra, "she must die!"

"Spare her, oh, spare her for my sake!"

"Impossible."

"Why is this fair country disfigured by such bloody deeds?"

The king was silent.

He took Birdie by the hand.

"Come with me!" he exclaimed; "you are not used to this sort of thing."

"I will not leave her."

"You must."

"Have some pity! She is only a child. Look at her."

The king turned away his eyes, for he was not as hard-hearted as the Fetishmen.

Had it not been for Benguela and the priests he would not have shed so much blood.

A short time before this poor girl had been his favorite wife, and when he thought of what she had been to him he relented.

The curse of polygamy is that it makes men brutal by lessening their respect for women.

Sankorra regarded the inmates of his harem as a butcher might look upon a herd of sheep.

"Your prayer is granted," he exclaimed.

"What!" said Issa, scarcely able to credit what she heard.

"Let her go."

"But, oh, king, there are seventy-six women in the harem, which is unlawful."

"She is a Kasonga girl. Send her to the village where she belongs."

There was nothing for Issa to do but obey, so she reluctantly unbound the captive.

"Are you satisfied?" asked the king.

"Yes," replied Birdie; "act always like this, and you will have you reward hereafter."

"Where is that?"

"In heaven."

"I never heard of that place. Come and tell me about it. I like to hear you Christians talk."

Birdie's heart beat proudly.

It was a great triumph for her to have the king speak in this way.

She recalled the words of Festus when Paul was arraigned before him, "Thou almost persuadest me to become a Christian."

If she could only convert the king she would have accomplished a great work.

When the girl was released from the stake she ran up to Birdie and kissed her hand, while tears of gratitude trembled on her eyelids.

Feeling that she was safe, Birdie accompanied the king into his favorite room, where clay pipes, tobacco and palm-wine were spread out on the floor for his use.

The Kasongas did not understand the use of a table or chairs.

They were too primitive for that.

"Wife," said the king, "I will listen to you."

"Stop!" replied Birdie. "I am your slave, and will be your servant, but I can never be your wife."

The king could only look in astonishment.

"Why not?" he queried.

"Because I do not love you, and the man I marry must only have one wife."

"What is love?"

"The true and spontaneous affection of the heart."

"I do not understand that," said Sankorra, shaking his head. "But I will have all my other wives killed."

"Do not do that. Send them away. Let them have their liberty, and take back the wife you have imprisoned."

"What shall I do with you? It is you I want."

"Let me be your friend."

Sankorra regarded her with a puzzled expression.

"But you must be my wife," he said. "Do you not know that I can have your head cut off?"

"Certainly."

"Are you willing to die?"

"Yes, rather than be married to you."

He rose and angrily paced the floor.

"I shall send you to the Ukaranga," he said, "and give you one week to consider. If at the end of that time you do not consent I shall kill you."

Birdie inclined her head.

She had heard of the Ukaranga, or the Lonely Tower, in which the queen was imprisoned.

It had been her wish to see Queen Taborah, and she was glad of this decision of the king.

"I will go," she said, "and while I am there I will pray that your hard heart may be softened, and that you will be enabled to see the wickedness that is in it."

"To whom will you pray?"

Birdie pointed to the sky.

"To the Creator who hearkens to the humblest of those who believe in Him," she replied.

"Is He a great spirit?"

"Yes, indeed."

"Like that one which dwells in Kungue a Banza, the sacred idol?"

"Oh," said Birdie, contemptuously, "that is a mere thing of wood. It is only barbarians like you that worship stocks and stones."

"You do not know what you say," he replied, "that I let you talk to me like this. If any one else had done it their blood would be dyeing the earth now."

Suddenly a piercing shriek rent the air.

Birdie ran to the open space in the wall which served the purpose of a window.

Looking out, she beheld a sight which made her blood curdle in her veins.

The girl whom the king had released was again bound to the stake.

The women of the harem were armed once more with the sharp assagais.

This time it was Benguela who directed the execution, and not Issa.

The latter had retired, fearing the king's displeasure.

Soon after Birdie and Sankorra had entered the building together, Benguela, who never allowed the king to be long out of his sight, had come in.

Issa had communicated to him the strange conduct of Sankorra.

This had angered Benguela, who determined for once to assume the responsibility of seeing the time-honored customs of Kasonga land carried out.

He presumed on the weak-mindedness of the king.

Calling the women together, he had the girl rebound to the stake.

"Kill her!" he exclaimed. "I will be responsible."

It was when the victim saw the assagais raised to take her life that she uttered the shriek which had aroused Birdie.

"Strike!" cried Benguela.

The spears flew from the hands of the women, and though many missed the mark, over a score stuck in the quivering flesh.

One, better aimed than the rest, entered the heart, and with a despairing wail the girl died.

"What is it?" asked the king.

Birdie shrank back, covering her face with her hands in horror.

"Look!" she replied.

Sankorra did not fail to do so, and his eyes flashed as he saw the dead girl, with her head drooping over her shoulder.

It was a revolting sight.

The assagais were sticking in all parts of her body, and the hot blood was trickling from the wounds.

The king marched into the yard, and the magician faced him boldly.

"I have done this," he said.

"Why have you dared to counteract my order?" asked the king.

"Simply because the spirits wished it. If this land is to be saved from invasion, if it is to be rescued from the iron heel of King Urinza, we must obey the spirits."

Sankorra lowered his eyes and the angry fire died out of them.

"That is so," he replied.

"Come with me to Kungue a Banza and make a suitable offering."

"Now?"

"At once. Nothing else can save you or your people."

Sankorra did not hesitate.

He placed his trembling hand on the shoulder of the magician and quitted the palace with him.

So far, Benguela had conquered again.

In fact, he was the real ruler of the country, and the king was but a puppet in his hands.

CHAPTER X.

IN THE LONELY TOWER.

FOR an hour after the king's departure Birdie Merlin remained alone, not even Issa coming near her.

She walked up and down the room, lamenting that Christian influence could not be exerted over this benighted land.

It was, indeed, a country where the efforts of the missionary would bring forth incalculable results.

The body of the dead girl was taken away and carried out of the precincts of the city, to be thrown to the wild beasts that roamed the neighborhood.

What her own fate might be Birdie did not stay to consider.

She saw that Benguela and the priests, or Fetishmen, were the curse of the country.

If Benguela could be got rid of and the king removed from the malign influence of the priests there would be some chance of converting him to Christianity, and making him the pioneer of the true faith in the Christian portion of the world.

While she was reflecting the two men who had brought her to the harem from the boiling well made their appearance.

They told her to follow them, which she did, knowing full well that it would be useless to resist.

The King's power was despotic, and whatever he ordered must be done.

She had to toil over a dusty plain, under a hot sun, for some miles.

At length a tower, constructed somewhat like a Chinese pagoda, but having only three stories, was seen.

This was the Ukaranga.

In this lonely place the good Queen Taborah was confined, owing to the malignity of Benguela and her own steadfast adherence to the faith which she had embraced.

The Reverend Mr. Hill, in pursuance of his missionary work, had implanted ideas in her breast which could never be eradicated.

The seed had fallen upon fertile soil, and no thorns could spring up to choke the product.

An old woman and a soldier were the only custodians of the tower.

They, however, were quite sufficient to guard and attend upon the young queen.

Birdie was given into their custody, and they were told that she was to share the queen's captivity.

Then the priests left her.

She was ushered into a dwelling-room, in which sat upon the floor a young and remarkably handsome woman.

Since she had been in Africa Birdie had not seen any one so beautiful.

No wonder the savage king loved her, and refused to sacrifice her at the bidding of the magician.

She was reading a book, which at a glance Birdie saw was a Bible.

To read was an accomplishment so rare among the various tribes as to excite astonishment.

The queen looked at Birdie with a compassionate glance.

"Ah," she exclaimed, "you are white."

"Yes," replied Birdie; "I came from over the sea."

"Thank heaven! you are from the land of the Bible, where they preach the blessed gospel and have no hindrance."

The queen spoke in very good English, which showed that Mr. Hill's labors had not been lost upon her.

After a pause, she added:

"Why are you here?"

"I was captured by the Warna slave-dealers and sold to your husband."

"Sankorra, the king?"

"Yes; he wished to make me one of his wives. I would not consent. In a week's time, if I have not changed my mind, I am given the pleasant alternative of having my head cut off."

"Poor child! Why did you come to Africa?"

"I came with the son of the missionary, Mr. Hill, who is in search of his father."

"Indeed! I am well acquainted with Mr. Hill. It was he who converted me. I owe to him, at one and the same time, all my misery and all my happiness."

"How?"

"I am happy in being a Christian, I am miserable at being separated from the king and kept in this solitary confinement."

"It is all owing to Benguela," said Birdie.

"Do I not know it?"

"He is a bad man."

"Truly. I live in constant dread of being assassinated. With such powerful enemies as the priests in this country, life is very uncertain," said the queen.

The conversation between Birdie and the queen lasted a long time. Taborah was deeply interested in the adventures of the beautiful girl who had suffered so much, and Birdie evinced the deepest sympathy for the queen.

"Sankorra is not naturally an unkind man," said the queen, "and my advice to you is to marry him."

"But you are his wife?" replied Birdie.

"There is little hope for me. I feel that Benguela will have me killed."

"Oh, do not say so!"

"It is ever present to me, sleeping and waking; my coming fate haunts me in my dreams."

Taborah had a firm presentiment that she was to be assassinated.

"He dare not do it," said Birdie.

"There is nothing that man dare not do. If you married Sankorra you might save this unhappy country from the paganism with which it is cursed, and with the true religion would come civilization."

"I can't do it, because I love another."

"Willie Hill?"

"Yes, the missionary's son."

"Perhaps you will never see him again," hazarded the queen.

"Then I will live single for his sake."

"Brave girl. You are so good and true that you make me feel proud of my sex!" exclaimed Taborah.

Birdie inquired of the queen what she imagined the fate of the Reverend Mr. Hill was.

"It is difficult to say," replied Taborah. "I heard that, when I was seized by the intrigues of Benguela and the magicians and cast into this prison, Mr. Hill was taken to the Sacred Grove, where the great idol is."

"What would they do with him there?"

"I cannot tell. Many dark and mysterious stories have I heard of Kungue a Banza. Among these, it is said that a huge boa-constrictor is kept in a hut to guard the idol, and that he is fed on human beings."

"Horrible!"

"They are cast alive into the serpent's den."

"Do you think this has been the end of Mr. Hill?"

"It's just the kind of death that the fiendish ingenuity of Benguela would devise."

"Heaven help him, poor man!" exclaimed Birdie.

"Then again, there is reported to be a white elephant in the sacred grove, which tramples men and women to death as a suitable sacrifice to the idol. That he is alive I do not think. What his end has been we can only conjecture."

Several days passed.

The women became more attached to each other than ever, and Birdie dreaded the end of the week, which would see her once more before the king, and separate her, perhaps for ever, from the queen.

Her mind, however, was firmly made up.

She would under no circumstances marry Sankorra, and if he decided to have her killed, she was willing to die.

One day the old woman who attended upon the prisoners came in to the tower greatly excited.

"What is the matter, Togela?" asked the queen.

"War has broken out!" was the reply.

"Between whom?"

"Kasonga land and the Matamas."

"Is that so?"

"Yes. There has been fighting, and the Matamas are driven back, but they will fight again."

"What is it all about?"

"Oh, it is these Christians," replied Togela, contemptuously.

Birdie's heart fluttered in her breast.

She could not help thinking that, somehow, Willie was concerned in this warfare.

"The fact is," continued the old woman, "King Urinza has a white boy at the head of his army, and he demands the mishiri, which Benguela will not give up."

"A white boy!" repeated Birdie.

"Yes, and he fights like a lion. They say he killed ten men yesterday himself."

Birdie looked at the queen.

"It is Willie!" she ejaculated.

"Indeed, I hope so," replied Taborah.

The male attendant had also entered the room with some food, which he placed on the ground.

It was only roast goat's meat, pounded corn and water, but to the captives that was a sumptuous meal.

"Have you heard the latest news?" he asked.

"No," replied the queen.

"There's been another battle to-day between us and the Matamas."

Birdie clasped her hands.

"Who won?" she asked.

"We did. The Kasongas can fight, and we captured the young white chief."

"Is that true?"

"So they say."

Birdie's countenance fell at hearing this bad news.

Wandering Willie was in the hands of the enemy, and she knew what that meant.

Benguela would not be likely to show him any mercy.

"Who told you?" she inquired.

"A messenger came up with some provisions, and as he was in the fight he ought to know."

The attendants retired after this, and the women sat down to discuss the intelligence.

Their dinner remained untasted, for they were both deeply interested in the fate of the invading army.

If Urinza conquered, it would be so much the better for them.

If, on the other hand, he was beaten back, and the young white chief whom they believed to be Willie was captured, then their doom was sealed.

The heat that day was very oppressive.

They were not allowed to go out. There was no shade in the vicinity of the Tower, and the current of air that entered at the window was as hot as the sirocco-laden blast of the desert.

Taborah, being born under a hot sun, did not feel the heat so much as Birdie, who was completely prostrated.

Getting as near the window as she could, she lay down on some mats and fell asleep.

Taborah occupied herself with the Bible, which she read incessantly.

She had all the zeal of a recent convert.

When she came to any striking passage she paused a while and pondered over it.

"In the midst of life we are in death."

She repeated these words half a dozen times, and thought how very applicable they were to her own situation.

Then she came to another.

"Those who believe in me shall not die."

This set her thinking about the life eternal, and a seraphic smile illumined her face. She felt that she could leave this world without regret, and could afford to defy the malignity of her enemies.

Soon she, too, sank into a doze, her eyelids softly falling over her eyes, while she thought of the grand sacrifice on Calvary, which meant so much for those who could appreciate it.

All at once the door opened and a man looked in.

It was Benguela.

Behind him was a man armed with an assagai.

"Good!" exclaimed the magician, in a low tone; "she sleeps."

"And the other?" asked the second man.

"I see her in a corner. See, too, sleeps."

"Am I to kill both?"

"No; it would not be safe to slay the white slave, as the king is infatuated with her, but with the queen we may do as we like."

"Shall I strike now?"

"Yes, and strike home."

The assassin crept stealthily forward with a gliding, snake-like motion.

When he reached the sleeping queen he raised his assagai and took good aim.

With the force of an arrow shot from a bow it sought her heaving bosom and passed through her body, pinning her to the earth.

The deed was done.

Taborah heaved a sigh, a stifled groan escaped her, and she gave up the ghost.

Her presentiment of evil had been fulfilled.

The assassin did not take the trouble to remove the assagai; he left it in the body of his victim and crept back to Benguela.

In doing so, he neglected to see a small snake, which was lying on the floor.

This reptile had dropped from the roof and was of a most venomous species.

No sooner had the man trodden on it than it turned its hideous crest and struck him in the leg. He uttered a loud cry.

"I am bitten," he said.

Benguela disappeared without offering to lend him any assistance; indeed it would have been useless to do so, as the bite was fatal.

The man was doomed.

His cry aroused Birdie, who awoke only to see a horrible sight.

The queen was dead almost in front of her, and her murderer was writhing on the floor in fearful agony, while the serpent was crawling away after having spent its venom.

She went to Taborah and called her by name.

Receiving no answer she pulled the assagai from her bosom and a stream of blood spouted up into her face.

Sick at heart she felt a film come over her eyes, and failing prostrate over the corpse, fainted away.

CHAPTER XI.

FATHER AND SON.

THE report which the attendant in the lonely tower brought to Birdie was well founded.

WANDERING WILLIE.—"'BACK,' CRIED THE HIDEOUS OLD HEATHEN, 'OR I WILL FLAY THE FLESH OFF YOUR BONES!' 'STRIKE!' SAID BIRDIE. 'I AM NOT AFRAID WHEN I AM DOING MY DUTY.'"—SEE PAGE 247.

It is not always that rumor can be relied on, but in this case it was correct.

Queen Jumah had not allowed the grass to grow under her feet.

She had anticipated the reply which her messenger brought from Sankorra.

Her army was ready to march at a moment's notice.

Urinza allowed her to have her own way in everything, and Willie, without any difficulty, obtained permission to take command of the army.

It was fitting that he should do so, as the expedition was intended to rescue his father, if living, or avenge him if dead.

When the army invaded Kasonga land they found that their visit had been anticipated.

They were met by a large force, which they battled with all day, gaining a slight victory as the enemy retreated, but they were unable to follow up their advantage.

The next day the fight was renewed, and during the *mêlée* Willie was captured.

He had engaged a score of Kasonga men single-handed, and a blow from a spear stretched him senseless on the ground.

He was at once captured and taken to the city, where he was delivered into the hands of Benguela.

King Sankorra had experienced a relapse of his malady, and was sick again with the fever.

At least, this was what he thought.

In reality, Benguela had administered to him an enervating drug, which rendered him feeble and helpless.

It was not intended to destroy life, but to keep the king so weak that he could not attend to business.

While he was in this condition Benguela could administer the affairs of the kingdom and do very much what he liked.

Benguela looked at Willie, and seeing that he was white, at once took a strong aversion to him.

He hated a white person, because he knew the whites were superior to himself and his people.

Calling a priest named Mandonga, he gave him some instructions in a low tone of voice.

Willie's arms were bound behind him, and a piece of the rope hung loosely on the ground.

Seizing this, Mandonga said:

"Follow me!"

"Hold on a minute!" replied Willie. "Where am I going to?"

Mandonga pointed to Benguela.

"Ask him," he answered.

"To the Sacred Grove," said the magician.

"And then?" queried Willie.

"You will find out in time."

"Tell me now. Why keep me in suspense? I am brave. If I am to die, let me know how."

"You shall be used for the sacred serpent," exclaimed Benguela.

"What!"

Willie recoiled in horror.

"In the grove which is sacred to the great idol, Kungue a Banza, is a serpent, and we sacrifice a man once a month to the holy snake. To-morrow is the day appointed for the offering. We have a man ready, a missionary, but he can be kept. The snake only eats once a month. He shall live until another moon."

"A missionary, did you say?" asked Willie.

"Yes, a Christian dog."

"His name?"

"Hill."

"Oh, heaven! my father," cried Willie.

Benguela's eyes flashed fire at this admission.

"Are you the son of that hound," he exclaimed, "who has brought all the trouble on this land?"

"I am," replied Willie, fearlessly.

"Then you shall die together."

He waved his hand, and the attendant, seizing the rope, dragged Willie away.

His father was alive! That thought comforted him, for perhaps he might be able to save him, after all.

[To be continued.]

"Wandering Willie" was commenced in No. 654.

AT LAST.—"THERE HAD BEEN A SINGLE DEEP GROAN, AND A FIGURE HAD RUSHED PAST THE CABIN WINDOW: A FIGURE WHOSE HEART WAS CLEFT BY A KEEN BLADE."—SEE PAGE 244.

THE CLIFF COMBAT.

ALTHOUGH the lammergeyer is classed among the vultures, it little resembles those birds of sluggish habits and unattractive form. In place of the bare head, and neck frequently covered with unsightly wattles, or with the skin folded in unseemly wrinkles, the lammergeyer is fully feathered to the beak, and its piercing eye and trim shape cause it to resemble more the lordly eagle than the useful though repulsive birds with which it has been ranked. Its spread of wing and powers of flight are great; and this bandit of the air does not hesitate to attack any object that is suitable for food which it may see. So bold is it, that man's presence at times causes it no fear.

A well-known traveler relates that once when camped at a certain place, during the preparation of the noonday meal, one of these great birds suddenly alighted near by, and walking up to the kettle, thrust its foot into it and endeavored to draw out a leg of mutton, which was being cooked. The boiling water, however, was a great surprise to it; it let go its hold, and flew away a short distance, to ruminate over the warm reception it had met with. For satisfied with its repulse, it soon returned again, and, unmindful of the different persons sitting around, seized upon another piece of meat that was lying almost in their midst, and was killed in the act of carrying it away.

Its actions are ungraceful, and it appears to disadvantage when on the ground, although it walks well, and it is only when launched in its native element, the air, that it moves with grace and freedom. Behold it now, as on outstretched wings it sails majestically along, ascending at times above the snow-capped peaks of the mighty Alps, gazing with an undimmed eye even at the fierce light of the noonday sun, or searching with penetrating gaze every spot upon the rugged mountain-side, where, perchance, an animal might find a resting-place, which, by some sudden swoop, it might seize in its talons, and bear away, to satisfy for a moment its voracious appetite. Scarcely a flap is needed of those mighty wings to bear it onward, and the rudder-like tail, by almost imperceptible movements, guides its swift course.

Monarch of those airy fastnesses is it, and as it glides above the glistening lakes that mirror its passing form, or looks down upon the valleys nestling at the feet of the towering mountains, far, far beneath it, it seems to rejoice in its pride of strength and in its freedom, and screams forth at intervals a shrill cry of exultation. But suddenly its onward flight is arrested, for the quick eye has discerned something, and it seems to consider some course of action, as it makes a few uncertain movements.

Springing lightly along the side of an almost inaccessible cliff, jumping from point to point, and alighting often upon ledges so narrow that even the slender hoofs scarcely find space to rest, a chamois with her single young is seeking a better pasturing-ground. The little thing follows closely in the rear of its only protector,

imitating all her movements, and jumping at one and the same time, at the apparent imminent risk of ill-loding both, and of falling headlong into the awful abyss beneath. Yet nothing can be surer than their foothold; and although the kid has seen but a few short weeks of life, it traverses the difficult rocks as easily as though it possessed the practice and experience of many Summers, and seems to feel as secure as if no precipice yawned beneath, and no deadly foe soared above.

Who so watchful as a mother? Even as she springs to a somewhat wider ledge, ever on her guard that no harm should overtake her young, she spies the mighty bird checking its course, and prepares to resist the attack which she knows so well her enemy is meditating.

With raised head and outstretched nostrils she breathes defiance, and impatiently strikes the ground with her forefoot, while the little one, apprised by its mother's movement that danger is near, cowers behind, and partly beneath her. Ah, that tender creature would be a fine prize for the lammergeyer to bear away to some lofty crag and tear it to pieces at its leisure, and it does not long hesitate to attempt its capture.

Too cunning to stoop upon the old chamois, whose sharp, curved horns are presented toward it, the mighty bird endeavors to distract her attention and to draw her away from the kid by feints and stoops only half-executed. But the chamois is too knowing to be lured away from her charge, and then the vulture changes its tactics, and, darting swiftly by, strives to push with its powerful wings the watchful animal off the narrow ledge, that she may be dashed to pieces upon the rocks below. With legs apart, and feet firmly braced, shielding her young behind her own body, the fearless chamois successfully resists all these attempts; and then, angered at being so foiled, her daring assailant makes a final effort. Sailing away and aloft to gain impetus and strength for the plunge, it mounts above the destined victim, and then, steadying itself for a moment to make sure of its aim, descends with the swiftness of a thunderbolt. The sharp and cruel talons are curved and thrown forward, ready to seize upon the cowering young. But, as it clutches at its prey, it meets only the armed head and rigid body of the undaunted dam, and is hurled aside as though it had come into collision with a rock.

Well done, brave mother! No prouder decoration could you wear than that tuft of feathers torn from the breast of your cruel adversary by the curved horn, and the floating plumes borne away on the breeze bear witness to the strength of your resistance. Dismayed, discomfited, defeated, the enraged lammergeyer, shrieking its disappointment as it rests for a moment on a neighboring ledge, prepares to seek another prey less vigorously defended, bearing away in its torn plumage evidences of the power which even a comparatively feeble animal may exert when called upon to shield its helpless offspring.

THREE BOYS.—"'THERE ARE FOR YOU, DOCTOR, WITH OUR COMPLIMENTS.' 'CAN YOU SPARE THEM?' 'ABUNDANTLY. LOOK AT WHAT A PILE WE LEFT ON THE GRASS BY THE GATE.'"

Distinguished Scholars of Brooklyn (N. Y.) Schools.

FRANK M. DEVOE,

PUPIL OF GRAMMAR SCHOOL NO. 34, NORMAN AVENUE, BROOKLYN, N. Y.

FRANK M. DEVOE is a boy of marked application and success in study, who is attending Grammar School No. 34, Norman Avenue, Brooklyn, N. Y. He has never failed at any examination for promotion, and some months since he became a member of the first grammar class. The Principal of the school, Mr. A. V. Davis, a very intelligent and conscientious man, says that he recognizes in young Devoe the sterling ability which is certain to make him successful in the higher as well as inferior studies. He was born in the City of New York, June 8th, 1865, making him fourteen years of age. He is the son of Franklin M. and Mary A. Devoe. When between six and seven years old he commenced going to school at Hunter's Point, and then entered No. 34, in the Primary Department. He has shown great interest in his studies throughout. He is naturally an active and intelligent boy, and he goes on from day to day with an excellence of deportment and an energy which are not only beneficial to himself but an example to all who study with him. He has talent in elocution, and recently recited the "Burial of Moses" with astonishing effect. He has a well-formed head and an interesting face. He is a boy whom teachers and friends are willing to commend, and it is of such material that the future is to look for its useful and virtuous men. Grammar School No. 34 has a register of over eleven hundred pupils.

FRANK M. DEVOE, PUPIL OF GRAMMAR SCHOOL NO. 34, NORMAN AVENUE, BROOKLYN, N. Y.

SOPHIE C. VOSSELER,

GRADUATE OF GRAMMAR SCHOOL NO. 17, NORTH FIFTH STREET, BROOKLYN, N. Y.

SOPHIE C. VOSSELER is a distinguished graduate of Grammar School No. 17, North Fifth Street, Brooklyn, N. Y., but who is still in the classroom, giving her attention both to study and training as a teacher. "I can indorse her," said Mr. Henry D. Woodruff, the veteran Principal of the school, "for all that is good in a young lady and brilliant in scholarship." Anna R. Smith, the intelligent head of the female department, also spoke in the same terms. Miss Vosseler was born at Cumberland, Md., August 21st, 1859. She is the daughter of the Reverend George H. and Margaret Vosseler. When seven years old she entered a private German school in Maryland, and subsequently attended other private schools and also a public school. Six years ago she entered No. 17, in Brooklyn, in the Fifth Grade of the Grammar Department. In the different classes she was noted for her diligence and improvement. She passed two years in the academic studies, and finally graduated with a per centage of ninety-three. She has passed an examination for a teacher with the same per centage, and is anxious for an appointment to begin the professional work of her life. To her thorough studies she is now adding a review, and at the same time is obtaining practical training as a teacher. Many of the girls in the grammar schools intend to become teachers, and several noticed as pupils in this column are now honored teachers in schools. Hence we are happy to offer here such a model as Miss Vosseler. True to all the pure and beautiful characteristics of her sex, she is preparing still further to honor it by devoting her culture to the instruction of the young. She is of pleasing appearance and engaging manners.

SOPHIE C. VOSSELER, GRADUATE OF GRAMMAR SCHOOL NO. 17, NORTH FIFTH STREET, BROOKLYN, N. Y.

THREE BOYS.

A Story of a High School.

BY WILLIAM O. STODDARD.

CHAPTER XXII.

THERE were other things besides baseball and boxing-lessons going on that Saturday forenoon.

Just about the time the boys made their appearance on the green, Deacon Smith stood in the door of his mill, saying to Dan:

"Sure that pony belonged to those two squatters?"

"Sure. They turned him loose when they left, early in the Summer. Now they've come back, it's no use to try and get any work out of him."

"Then you'd best put him in the pound and I'll send a bill for his keep and damages."

"All right, sir. I'd best 'tend to it, fust thing, 'fore they hear tell of where he is. I turned him loose again in the pasture lot last night. Worked him well while I had him, though. He came up fast on good feed. There's stuff in him."

And Dan swung his long legs away toward the pasture in a hurry, but when he reached it and climbed the fence he looked in vain for the pony.

"Over 'tother side, I guess. Beyond the rise. Just where they'd sight him if they was passin'."

Exactly. That was where the pony was gone. And somebody had been passing and had seen him, for by the time Dan had got to the end of the pasture over the "rise," two rough-looking characters were putting up the bars into the road, and one of them held a halter fitted to the black head of the pony.

"Where 're ye going with that hoss?" shouted Dan, excitedly.

"Going? Why, it's ours. How'd you ever come to take him up? You know who he belonged to."

So he did. There was no such thing as denying it, and Dan came down a little with:

"Oh, it's yours, is it? When 'd ye git back? Goin' inter the charcoal biz again?"

"Guess not. Loaf 'round for some pigeons and squirrels. Look for odd jobs and such till it's time to go into the mountains for deer. Tired of town life and tramping. The pony's looking tip-top. Only a bit thin. You must have worked him pretty hard."

"Only had him up a week or so. Deacon 'll let ye up on that. You kin send him a mess of pigeons some day."

"All right. Mebbe we will. Can't say."

And the two rough customers lounged away down the road, while Dan soliloquized:

"Hard ones, or I'm mistaken. We don't want their ill-will, though. There's no telling what sech as they won't do. But won't the deacon be riled? I guess so."

The deacon was "riled," indeed, but he agreed with Dan that it would scarcely pay to make any fuss about the pony or his "keep."

"Ain't a-going to burn charcoal this time?" he added. "Well, then, I reckon folks had best keep an eye on their sheep and their hen-roosts."

I never heerd tell of their doin' anythin' out of the way," said Dan, "but I don't like the looks of 'em."

There were now two horses up at the log hut on the hillside, and to the miller's surprise, one of them was driven down, the next Monday, after a load of "feed"—oats, bran and the like, and it was paid for, and so, be learned, had been a good lot of groceries and provisions the two squatters had bought of Calkins and Muggin.

"Reckon their money won't last long," he said to himself, "and then honest folks had better look out."

Be that as it might, things around the old log-house began to assume an almost comfortable appearance.

A very decent shelter was put up for the two ponies. Adjoining that was built a cowshed, with a queer little tenant of a cow, as if the squatters had taken a fancy to milk. Of furniture there was indeed very little. No more than could have been easily brought in the one-horse wagon, but quite enough for such rude housekeeping.

It is wonderful how very little a human being really needs, when you cut him down to it.

Of one thing the squatters had enough, and that was arms and dogs. Two double-barreled guns, two good rifles. Not repeaters, though. Besides these, a revolver hung in its belt-case over each of the rude couches where those two men slept, and a pair of strong, half-bred deerhounds did duty as watch-dogs at night, and in the absence of their masters by day.

What had all this to do with the three boys at Bunker Academy?

Nothing in particular, as yet.

Certainly not half so much as some things that were stirred up by their respective letters home, after that Saturday's performances on the village green.

They had been questioned pretty sharply by their landlady and her daughter when they went to dinner, and Mrs. Porrance roundly expressed her astonishment, not only at the good appearance they made, but at Sol Rogers's assertion.

"Fight? No, it was a game of ball. Van was captain of our nine, and the way we played the noodles wasn't slow, now, I tell you."

"But was there really no fight?" anxiously inquired Almira.

"Can't say. We're peaceable, we are. By-the-way, Van, didn't you see a sort of a disturbance among the boys, just before the game began?"

"Seems to me I did. But then Dr. Betts was there, and he'll know what to do about it."

"Dade an' he will, then," remarked Pat Nolan. "He's a fine man."

Not a black eye or a bruise to be seen among them, and yet she had been told such awful things.

It was a mystery, and Mrs. Porrance gave it up with, "I guess there's been a mistake made somewhere."

"Shouldn't wonder," said Sol. "Most likely those Hinckley boys and their crowd made it. They never did know any too much."

They never before knew quite as much as they did that day, not only from the results of this unlucky "hustle," but from the sharp lecture they got from Doctor Betts in consequence.

He had wound up with, "I scarcely need advise you to let young Rivington and his friends alone. They have taken care of that for themselves."

And he could not have said anything more galling, if he had tried his best.

After dinner was over, Sol remarked to Mrs. Porrance:

"Little Doctor Betts has invited all three of us to call on him, and we've no time to lose. Two o'clock was his hour."

"So, then, there was something?"

"Of course, Mrs. Porrance. He would not trouble us to call if he did not need our advices. Pat can tell him how to shell corn."

Off they went, and there was almost an expression of pride in Mrs. Porrance's face as she looked out of the window after them.

"They'll go," she said. "I believe there was a fight, and I'm bound to find out all about it."

The remarkable three, however, were less interested in their landlady's opinion of them than they were in the momentous interview before them.

The home of Doctor Betts was a very pretty sort of a place, and a whole wing of it was given up to the comfortable "library," in which he received his visitors. The average "boy," or other student of the academy, was supposed to have the same sort of feeling for that room and its varied contents that a man of the old time might have had for the laboratory of an out-and-out magician.

He must have been a brave sort of chap who could have mustered cheek enough to tell the doctor a lie with the backs of all those tremendous books looking down from their shelves and watching him all the time.

Sol and his friends had no lies to tell for themselves about anything, and their very straightforward answers, not to mention some peculiarly quaint remarks dropped by Sol Rogers himself, seemed, on the whole, to be satisfactory to the academy principal.

He told them as much, but with a severity of countenance which took nothing from the force of his decision, that they must each write home a full account of the affair to their parents.

This they promised to do that very day, and they kept their words faithfully. How should they have known that a similar promise had been exacted of their several assailants?

It had been, nevertheless, and when, a few days later, the mother of Solomon Rogers met that of Robert and Joseph Hinckley at their Church Sewing Society, there was a look of something like suppressed satisfaction on the face of the latter as she remarked:

"I suppose you've heard from Sol, Mrs. Rogers? Dreadful, is it not? But boys will be boys. I hope your son was not really much hurt."

"Hurt? No; not a scratch. And, indeed, Robert and Joseph ought not to bear any malice. They began it. It was not the fault of Sol and his friends that they had to defend themselves. Doctor Betts thinks so, too."

"Doctor Betts? Why, he told my boys to write

to me and explain the matter. They were compelled to beat——"

"Beat, indeed! You mean to get a beating. I've no doubt whatever it was a sound one. Sol says he never saw a better boxer than his roommate, young Rivington. No wonder a couple of green country boys could not face him. They ought never to have tried. He didn't get a scratch, either. Nor did the Irish boy that helped them. You should teach your sons better wisdom, as well as better manners, Mrs. Hinckley."

She said all that with such rapidity that her astonished neighbor could not get a word in edgewise, and when she had finished it, the latter, whose flushed face and snapping eyes betrayed the depth of her interest in that little skirmish on Bunkerville green, could only gasp:

"Mrs. Rogers, I declare! Who would have thought you would have supported your rowdy boy in such wickedness?"

"Wickedness? It isn't wicked for him to defend himself, and if your boys got a sound thrashing, I've no doubt they deserved it."

"Thrashing, indeed! Did I ever hear the like! Why, I'll write to Doctor Betts about it."

"Do, then. No doubt he'll tell you more truths than your boys have sent you. Sol never told me a lie in his life."

Nor had he in the present case; but he had sent his mother so graphic and withal so humorous and complete an account of the discomfiture of the Hinckley crowd as had resulted in making a lifelong enmity between the two matrons.

For all that, each mother sent to Bunkerville a well-written lecture on the evil of getting into fights with bad boys.

Bad boys like the Hinckleys were described in one letter.

Very bad boys like Sol Rogers and his friends were set forth in the other.

But what were Mr. and Mrs. Rivington to do with the very frank and manly statement sent them by their own son—the captain and the victor of the whole business?

"Husband," said Van's mother, "I've no doubt it was just as he describes it."

"Exactly. He's no coward. He isn't one bit afraid of you or me. He wouldn't vary a hair from the truth."

"No, he never did."

"What shall you write him, then?"

"Tell him to give Doctor Betts my compliments, and thank him for the kind interest he has taken," said her husband.

"But about the fight?"

"Advise him to keep clean out of just as many as he can. Boys like him don't fight if they can help it, anyhow."

"I hope those other boys will let him alone."

"Well, from what he says about it, I'm half inclined to think they will. I'm glad he's so good a boxer."

Good Mrs. Rivington had, as all good women have, a horror of fights and all brutality. She would have been glad to have all the world at peace.

And yet in her heart of hearts she was ready to join her husband just then in his pleasure over Van's skill.

That very day, however, just after the postman made his call, Mr. Maguire came up-stairs from the grocery to find Pat Nolan's mother in a high state of excitement.

"Did yez get a letther from Pat the day?" he asked.

"A letther, is it, indade? Misther Maguire, the boy's been fightin'."

"Fightin', is it? The young spalpane! Fightin', and disgracin' his family and friends. Was he much beaten, Mrs. Maguire?"

"Beaten? Ye old noodle! Is it me own b'ye ye're miscallin' with yer talk of disgr-r-race? Sure and he and the other two that was with him—good luck to them two b'yes—they bate the crowd that was four to wan against thim. Oh, but it's a grand letther! Ave that Dutch doctor ownly knowed how Pat was coming to the fore, wudn't he be a proud man?"

The grocer tried hard to look the "heavy father" for the occasion, but he was beginning to feel more than a little pride in his stepson "bein' eddecated at boordin'-school up in New England," and his Irish blood positively forbade any wrath against the victors in a "shinty."

So Pat Nolan received the least reproof of all three of them when the answer came to that letter of his.

CHAPTER XXIII.

MRS. PORRANCE may have been a bit proud of her boarders in her own way, but that had nothing whatever to do with her notions of the diet that was good for them.

It was toward the middle of the next week, at breakfast, that Van Rivington asked Sol Rogers:

"What on earth's the matter with your head—lost your comb?"

"No, not that. I've been planting too much corn, that's all. I'm beginning to taseel out. Don't you see, all my hair's turning to corn-silk."

Miss Almira looked daggers, but her mother never changed a muscle.

She would have scorned to notice a mere saucy remark from a boy like Sol Rogers. She had had too many of them under her roof, year after year, for that.

No change was made in the table supplies, therefore, for another week, except that the boys brought home a grand mess of fish and half a dozen squirrels on the Saturday.

And what made the whole thing more aggravating was the steady account Pat Nolan gave in of the quantities of butter, eggs, poultry and other good things, from the house and the farm, which he was compelled, from time to time, to deliver for Mrs. Porrance to various purchasers.

She was a woman who dealt for cash, both in buying and selling, and not even Calista A. Mugger could have beaten her much on a bargain.

Things were going on smoothly enough at the academy, and Pat Nolan had already won his promotion to a higher grade in his Greek and Latin, while he kept a good deal more than up to the mark in his other branches.

Again and again Doctor Betts felt called upon to wonder—

"How that boy could ever have managed to pick up so much in a mere public school!"

But Sol Rogers was growing thoughtful, so to speak, with every day that passed, and one evening he surprised his friends by shutting a volume of novels with a great bang, as he burst forth into:

"Boys, what's stealing?"

"Takin' what don't belong to ye. Unless it's a pony, and ye find him by the side of the road with no halter."

"Hush, Pat. What do you know about stealing? Van, you're going to be a lawyer, if ever you know enough. What's stealing?"

"Helping yourself without asking leave, and then not paying for it."

"Then isn't Mrs. Porrance stealing from us fellows?"

"What has she stolen?" asked Van.

"Everything but our corn. It almost stops my growth to think of it." All our mince and pumpkin pies, all our chickens and things. Just groan over it, boys."

"I don't know——" began Van.

"I don't, either. She can keep all she's got, but I'm dreaming of reform."

"What sort of a reform?"

"Oh, we can settle that as soon as we arrange about the honesty."

"Honesty of what?" said Pat.

"Of helping ourselves to our own. To the kind of things we pay for, and that Pat Nolan works for. Why, his very voice is getting husky, and I've corns coming on my toes."

"It's a fact," said Van. "We never made any bargain for so much corn."

"Dade an' we didn't," said Pat.

And whether or not this reasoning was morally sound, that council of boys broke up that night with a very positive decision, variously expressed, that the time for some sort of action had nearly arrived.

The first practical suggestion in the way of what Sol Rogers called "foraging for supplies" came from Pat Nolan, whose "sleeping-coop," again to quote from Sol, was just over the milk-room.

"I've found a knot in the floor," he said, "that comes out easy and it fits in again like a cork into a bottle."

"Pat, my boy, you're a jewel. I'll rig a pump. It's not the skim milk pans we'll go for."

Nor was it. A little tin pump was easily procured at the tinsmith's, and a length of common gas-pipe rigged to it. When it was completed it could easily be taken in pieces and hidden away, but, as Pat remarked, "it was a powerful dangerous thing for milk."

"Pat," said Sol, "it's not the pump that's dangerous. It's the knot-hole."

"No," remarked Van, it's not the knot-hole or the pump. It's the corn."

That was very well for a beginning, but the next bit of furniture was a little bit of a "kerosene stove," and that was accompanied by quite an array of cooking and eating utensils, of small size and cheap material. The whole outfit could be stowed away in Sol's trunk when not in use.

"Now," said Van, "for a rope-ladder. We can't be dependent on the front door."

"That's easy enough," said Sol. "And it won't be the first time there's been one put out of that window. You just hook the upper end to the window-sill, and the first boy that goes down fastens the lower end to the foot of the lilac-bush. Then it's easy traveling."

"We won't begin our housekeeping till we're good and ready," said Van. "Sol, you must cultivate a contented countenance, nowadays."

"What, play the hypocrite over all that corn?"

"Conceal your feelings, that's all. Be convinced that corn is good for you."

"It's a fine fruit," said Pat.

"I'll try. But it's my tongue I'm more afraid of than any other part of my face."

"True for you," said Pat. "Your wake spot's in your tongue."

Sol promised faithfully, and he succeeded a good deal better than might have been expected. Mrs. Porrance could not remember, in any previous year, having been blessed with so well-behaved and contented a lot of boarders.

So very fond of corn!

The milk-room, however, was Miss Almira's peculiar province, and a very neat place it was. Except in very cold weather, that poetical young lady rather liked the idea of being a "milkmaid." They are such a rosy kind of being, as everybody knows, and then Almira was by no means a lazy sort of person.

In fact, that milk-room was a kind of show affair, bright with shining tin and almost painfully clean.

Great, therefore, was the chagrin and annoyance of the milkmaid, morning after morning, when she unlocked the door and went in, to find great blotches and spatters of milk on the floor. Once, indeed, she found one of her pans of "last night's milk" half empty, although she could not see that the cream on the surface had been disturbed.

That was before Van decided to divide his pumping so as not to drain too much from any one pan.

"Mother," said Almira, after Mrs. Porrance had made a careful survey, "can it be rats?"

"None in the house. The window's fastened, too, and the lock's a good one. You must be careless."

"I, mother? Well, I'll just wipe the floor clean to-night, and we'll see. I'm never careless. The pans were full and I did not spill a drop."

Who did, then? You couldn't have drank up all that milk yourself. No, you don't hold enough!"

So far as that went, Mrs. Porrance could have beaten her daughter by at least a quart, but the next morning made a greater mystery of the matter than ever.

Pat had been running the pump and he forgot to let it drain back into the pan, all that was in the pipe, when he was done pumping.

"You've done it," Sol had said to him. "There's a good pint of it on the floor this time. It's an awful waste of good milk."

So it was, and their landlady and her daughter thought so when they came to see it.

"It can't be rats, mother. It's those awful boys."

"Boys, indeed! How'd they get in, I'd like to know?"

"They may have a key that fits that lock."

"I'll fix that. I'll put on a Dutch padlock. They won't pick that in a hurry. But then they haven't troubled the eggs. There's the basket. Count 'em."

A careful count showed that the eggs were all there; but the new padlock was brought out and put on that very day.

Those eggs! How they had weighed on the mind of Sol Rogers!

In fact, they had so stimulated his ingenuity that, that very evening, he astonished Pat and Van by producing a bit of a bag net that fastened on the end of the pump-tube.

"Now we've got 'em. See that?"

"They'll drop out," said Pat.

"No; the mouth of it pulls up like the mouth of a purse when you pull the string.

"It 'll only hold one at a time.

"That's all you can pull through the knothole. Two would stick us. It 'll be better fun than fishing."

So it proved to be, and a round dozen were angled for and lifted that very evening. What was more, they were nicely boiled and eaten, to the last egg, with plenty of new milk to keep them company.

If late suppers are ever good for boys, or anybody, those three were in a fine way to become fat.

That next morning, however, happened to be a Saturday, and the boys were counting on a grand day's fishing.

They meant to take their guns along; they hoped for Pat Nolan's company, and they anticipated a fine time generally.

They were up early, therefore, quite as much before their usual hour as were the ladies of the household.

Pat was already down and out, attending to the woodpile, the hen-house, and all that, when Sol and Van heard Mrs. Porrance and her daughter open the door of the milk-room.

"We'll see, now," said the former, in a strong, determined tone of voice.

"That lock hasn't been disturbed, for I kept the key myself."

"What, Van," exclaimed Sol. "Put down your gun. Fun's coming."

"Milk on the floor again, Almira, as sure as you live?"

"Mother! Those eggs! I'll count 'em right away."

She did, and came near turning pale as she announced the result.

"A dozen gone! Did you say there was a dozen gone?"

"Yes, mother, a dozen. And the milk, too. Mother, do you believe in ghosts?"

"Ghosts, and eggs and milk! Figs, Almira! I'm ashamed of you. There's something wrong about the window. Guess I can fix that. Only I don't see why they didn't take all the basketful. If I'd crawled through a window after eggs I'd never stop at a dozen."

"You don't mean to say you'd steal?"

"Almira, don't be a fool. Let's see about the window. I declare, I'll nail it down. That is, at the bottom. We can let in air at the top. Get me some nails and the hammer."

Sensible woman, not a doubt of it; and she made that milk-room as tight as a drum before she left it.

But the knot was all the while fitting tightly in its place overhead, and she never dreamed of three boys like her boarders creeping in through a knothole. She knew very well that they could not do anything of the kind. She could not have done it herself.

The breakfast-table was a trifle glum that morning, however, and Mrs. Porrance seemed, to Sol's perceptions, to cast a jealous eye on the jug of maple syrup and the way he poured its contents over the "flannel" pancakes.

"Splendid syrup," he said. "Pat, you must knock over something handsome to-day."

"Pat is not going with you this time. We want him at home."

It was hard on Pat, for he had toiled early and late that week, and that meant, as he always did, a good deal more than "half his board."

More than the whole of it, in any kind of money; but there was no appeal from that unjust decision.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THAT was a sad morning for Pat Nolan. Not only was he to miss his expected sport, but even before the breakfast-table was cleared the boys saw of Black Sam at work on a fresh load of wood, which had come in from the farm a day or so before.

"You're in for it," said Sol, as he stood with him a few minutes later and looked at Sam.

"Sure and she's gettin' back the worth of thim eggs."

"She is, that. But then cold weather's coming. She means we shan't freeze. We'll be having fires in our rooms inside of three weeks."

"Does ye reckon on de hornin' ob dese yere sticks?" inquired Sam, with a broad grin, as he stopped the motion of his saw. "'Cause if ye does, ye's gettin' fooled, dat's all."

"How's that?" said Sol.

"De yer load is a-cuttin' up for Mrs. Porrance's minister."

"Oh," said Pat, "that's all right. I don't care. So she means to give it away, does she?"

"Not much gib, I reckon. It jest counts in on de 'scription to his salary. Wood's jest as good as money, and she charges de price, you bet she does."

"Can't help that, no how," said Pat. "So he gets it I'll have to split it."

"Pat," exclaimed Sol, "we'll have to make some kind of reckoning for this Saturday's work. It'll all come right, my boy. She's no business to crowd that on you."

"I can't afford to make a muss."

"No, but you can afford to go in with us. We'll help you collect it, and we won't take all our change in eggs and milk."

He and Van were shortly on their way into the hills, catching rides, as usual, to save walking, and planning all sorts of things on their way.

"Vhn," said Sol, when at last they struck into the woods, on their way to the little lake they had selected for their fishing, "I wonder if it's a good place? We never were here before."

"You know as much as I do. I hope we'll have good luck to-day."

"For Mrs. Porrance's sake?"

"Not exactly. We'll talk about that. Let's keep an eye out—— Hullo! Hist! Look there!"

And he sank on the ground as he did so, followed by Sol in utter silence, while their fishing-rods were dropped and their guns thrust forward.

"Sol, they say it's not the correct thing to shoot partridges sitting."

"No more it is, but we haven't any dog. They'll rise when we give 'em the first barrel, and we can let 'em have the second on the wing. That's all the sportsmen we can afford to be with such a covey as that in less than ten rods of us. Ready?"

"All ready! One, two—fire!"

The birds, fat and fine, and a large covey had been clustered closely on the slope of a little knoll, and there was just enough of distance for the shot to spread well.

The second barrels, too, followed the first before the poor fair things could fairly take wing.

It was "pot-hunting" of the worst kind, and older sportsmen would have been a little ashamed of it, but it did bring down the game, for the boys picked up no less than seven victims on the spot, and two more that were wounded only flew a short distance before they also tumbled over.

"Did you ever hear of anything like that before, Van?"

"Never did, Sol. It's just a sort of bird-butchery. But they're fat ones, and no mistake."

"We needn't do any more shooting. Let's go in on our fish."

"The squirrels are out now. We may get a shot or two while we're just sitting around by the lake."

They were almost safe to count on that, only, as Sol said:

"One of their squirrels was a rabbit, and another was a wood-duck."

"No pigeons this time," remarked Van. "We must try the Gap again some day."

"No fishing there. But how they are biting this morning!"

So they were, and when the two friends set out for home they were almost ready to quarrel with the luck that gave them so much to carry.

It would have been a good deal worse but for the permission they got from a farmer to "Pile thar plunder on top of the wood" he was taking in, with a great lazy yoke of oxen to draw.

"You'll be late home to-night," said Sol.

"No, I won't. My old woman's in the ville. We're goin' to stay over Sunday and go back to-morrow night arter meetin'. Them's a splendid lot of birds. Lemme look at yer guns. So'thin' new, I reckon."

It was slow trudging after those oxen, but the edge of the town was reached at last, and there the two sportsmen halted for a council.

"Van," said Sol, "it would do little Doctor Betts a world of good to eat some of those partridges."

"There's more'n we want."

"One a piece for us to be cooked by our own fireside. The rest for our little friend. They might make him grow."

"I'm agreed; only I hope he'll stay where he is. He's big enough. But what about the fish?"

"We must take home all we need for breakfast, but I don't care to pile up Mrs. Porrance's dinner-table. She can do that herself," said Sol.

"It'll be corn, then."

"Let it. We'll have partridges in our room."

"But what'll we do with the rest?"

"Van, my boy, she's making Pat split wood for Sligo, her minister——"

"So you said."

"And Sam says it's charged to him on his subscription——"

"You said that, too, and it seems mean, but it's a way they have up here."

"Keep still, Van. He's a nice kind of chap, and he's got six young ones, and they don't look as if they had corn enough, let alone fish. Let's carry him a string and call it our subscription."

"Tip-top. The youngsters 'll go for 'em. I say, Sol, four birds 'll be enough for Doctor Betts. Let's put in two on Sligo. One for him and one for his wife."

"I like that. May be he 'll give us a better sermon to-morrow."

"One with birds in it?"

"Yes, or say fish."

"Now, then, Sol, let's get around to Doctor Betts's by the back street. Sligo's on the way home. Don't want anybody to know what we've been up to."

"Doctor Betts 'll know."

"No, he won't. We won't give our names. We'll just say they're from two of his nicest little boys."

"Van, you're a boy after my own heart. So is Betts. Come on."

They attracted but little attention on the almost deserted back street at that time of day, for the sun was not yet down and people were at their work. A few minutes more and they were standing on the broad front stoop of the doctor's residence, waiting for the door to open.

"You do the talking, Sol," said Van.

"I will, my boy——"

Just then the door swung wide.

"Good evening," young gentlemen. Will you walk in?"

"No, thank you, doctor. We've been fishing, and we've caught some partridges. I mean we've been shooting, and we've hooked some birds. I say, Van, you tell it."

The smile on the face of the academy principal was good-nature itself, as Van handed him two brace of the plump, well-feathered game, with the straightforward remark:

"These are for you, doctor, with our compliments."

"Can you spare them?"

"Abundantly. Look at what a pile we left on the grass by the gate."

"I think I will," said he, as he strode forward. "You must be good marksmen. Good fishermen, too. I thank you heartily, my young friends. I'm fond of game, but I have little time for shooting nowadays. Don't let your sports interfere with your studies, that's all."

"We will not, indeed," said Van, and Sol exclaimed, enthusiastically:

"Interfere, doctor? What wouldn't I give for a double-barreled breech-loading invention for learning Greek?"

But Doctor Betts only picked up his partridges and marched into the house, a good deal like a man who was trying not to laugh.

"We've captured him entirely," said Sol. "Now for Parson Sligo."

The door of the modest little white parsonage was half-hidden by a vine-covered trellis, and that seemed to serve as a kind of frame for the meek, sweet-faced little lady who made her appearance in it, in response to the bell-pull.

"Good-evening, Mrs. Sligo," said Van. "We've come to pay our subscription."

"Your subscription?"

"Yes, ma'am. We subscribe two partridges and a string of fish. Sorry we can't make it larger."

These was a frank and merry humor in Van's face and voice as he held out his subscription, and the minister's little wife laughed cheerily enough as she thanked him. Her husband's salary was apt to be paid in curious coin, but it did not always come to so pleasant a shape as that.

Two wee bits of boys were tugging at her gown seemed scarcely to know which to make the biggest eyes at—the birds, the fish, or the two polite and smiling boys.

These latter, however, were anxious to get away, now their errand was accomplished, and Sol remarked, as they shut the gate behind them:

"Van, how splendidly lighter our load is! I feel relieved."

"So do I. But I doubt if Mrs. Porrance would like it as well."

"I hope not. We won't tell her; not now, at least. But I do hope she'll find out, somehow."

"She will; don't you be afraid."

Mrs. Porrance was just the sort of woman to find out anything, but she knew nothing at all of the three partridges her boarders left in the shrubbery when they came in with the rest of their cargo.

"A wood-duck. They're wretched little things.

Two squirrels. There's not much of them. One rabbit, and not a big one, by any means. That's a slim account of a day's shooting. We'll not cook any of 'em for supper. The fish. Well, they'll do better. More'n we'll need for breakfast, but there won't be enough left for dinner."

"Oh, we'll have the game for dinner."

"No, I guess we'll keep that till Monday or Tuesday. I'll look out that it don't spoil. We'll divide the fish. We'll keep enough for breakfast. That'll be plenty!" (for she was separating them into two piles as she spoke). "Patrick, you know where the minister lives?"

"To be sure, ma'am."

"Then take those fish there as quick as you can, with my compliments, and come right back."

There was a trace of a cloud on Van Rivington's face, although he said nothing, but Sol Rogers slipped out with Pat as far as the front door.

"Sure you know the place, Pat? Reverend Mr. Belden's; brick house; left hand side; two blocks above the green. Hurry back; we've lots to tell you."

"Sure," said Pat to himself, as he trudged along, "av it hadn't been for Sol Rogers I'd have carried the fish to the wrong house."

So he would, indeed, and now he delivered them "with Mrs. Porrance's compliments," and hurried back.

"Did they say anything?" asked his landlady.

"Not a word, ma'am. I gave me errand and the fish to a girl at the door, and didn't stay a minute."

"You've been remarkably spry about it, that's a fact. Now we'll have supper. You must be flingry."

So they were, indeed, but they did not eat enough to bust them, for Sol had put them in mind of "eggs and things," and they waited.

The first thing he said to Van, after they got to their room, was:

"Van, my boy, don't look glum. Our revenge is begun. Those fish went to the one woman Mrs. Porrance hates most."

"Who is that?"

"Mrs. Belden. She's the wife of the minister of the other church, you know."

CHAPTER XXV.

IT is quite likely Mrs. Porrance would not have passed the remainder of that evening so placidly if she had known just where those fish had gone, or just how badly puzzled was tail, thin, black-eyed Mrs. Belden.

That latter lady positively declared to her husband:

"There's a trap in it, somewhere. You may depend upon it, Widow Porrance is a most designing woman."

"Can't help that," replied he; "they're capital fish. Look at that pickerel, and that bass, and those perch."

"Plenty for a small family like ours. But how'd she get 'em? Never bought 'em, you may depend on that."

"Bought 'em? Of course not. Her boarders caught 'em. I've heard of those boys. Great fishermen, and all that."

"Then she didn't rob herself. You may depend on that. What amazes me is that she sent 'em to us and not to Mr. Sligo."

"Anyhow, my dear, you must send her a polite note of thanks. If not to-night, in the morning."

"Before meeting?"

"Well, after. Or, seeing it's Sunday, you might leave it till Monday."

It was just as well, if Mrs. Porrance's Sunday was not to be spoiled for her.

Perhaps it would have been just as badly spoiled if she had known what was going on up-stairs in her own house. The boys went out after tea, and were gone a good while. Long enough to cut across the garden and the field beyond it, back of the house, to the margin of the bit of a river that supplied the ponds. They only remained there long enough, however, to pluck and clean three partridges. That was not a long while, either.

On their return they carried nothing through the front door. Almira let them in, and she could have sworn they came in just as usual, with nothing in their hands.

Pat, of course, went around to the wood-shed for an armful of wood for the kitchen, and that was all he brought in. He could stop on the way, though, as easily as not, under Sol's window, and hitch three nicely cleaned birds to a string Van Rivington let down from above for that purpose.

Oh, yes, Pat Nolan knew quite enough for that, and he did it, and there was nothing wrong in it, either.

When his chores were done, too, Mrs. Porrance was not the woman to keep him from joining his friends.

On the whole, she was pretty well satisfied with the way in which things seemed to be going—fish, game, boarders and all. That is, all things outside of the milk-room, but there was a mystery which was troubling her soul within her.

"It's the window. No doubt o' it, Almira; only I don't see how they got in, and then got out and fastened it so carefully behind 'em. It's nailed now, any way, and we'll see if we're to be robbed of our eggs and milk. If we are, I'll have Pat Nolan watch for 'em with his gun."

"Oh, mother!"

"I will, then; it's burglary."

"It's dreadful, mother, but so is a gun. And Pat! If any one's to watch, it ought to be Mr. Rivington."

"He's a good shot, I do believe," calmly responded the stern widow.

The milk-room supplied a plentiful subject for talk down stairs, but the boys were almost too busy for overmuch conversation.

"We've only room for one bird to-night," said Sol. "We'll broil that, and we'll have some coffee, and some toast, and some boiled eggs. I don't mind frying one or two. Those, Van, are from the barn, not the basket. Patrick brought them in."

"Breach of trust, Pat," said Van.

"Not any," said Pat. "It's not Mrs. Porrance's hens laid those eggs at all. They're not hers."

"How's that, Patrick?"

"Why, if the neighbors' hens find the barn-door open and wait in, and if then the door shuts itself bein' 'em so they lay eggs before they get out, and if they get used to that same, it's only chargin' 'em rent I am when I take care of the eggs for 'em."

It was a little mixed, Pat's argument on the egg question, but it was plain that he was dealing fairly with Mrs. Porrance.

"As for the hens," said Pat, "not a one of 'em asked me what would I do with the eggs."

At all events, they were fresh and good, and no cook in America could have added much to the flavor of that half-way "stolen meal," as the boys cooked it for themselves.

Little right had any one to complain of what they were doing with their own game and their own coffee, and so forth, but, even as they ate, they discussed plans for the future which promised worse, if not more dangerous, remedies for what Sol described as "Mrs. Porrance's corn-famine."

They talked and they talked, and their conversation drifted into pies.

"Mince pies, a-comin'," said Pat. "She bought all sorts of spices and things to-day, and the butcher is to bring her the pie-meat on Monday. Sure and she's going to make a pile of 'em."

"Mince pies?" exclaimed Sol. "That's her stronghold, Van. Now, that's a good piece of news."

"May be it is and may be it isn't," remarked Pat.

"How could't help it?"

"How? Well, I'll tell ye. The pies are for the big donation that's coming in a week or so, may be two, I can't say, at Mr. Sligo's. It's a way they have up here. Some other woman stands the meat, and Mrs. Porrance does the rest, and the baking. Then she carried that furmish cakes, and all that, and the pies, they invite the public and tell the minister's wife what else they'll want to eat, and then they all gather at his house and eat it up, ye know. That's what they call a donation, and they charge it to the minister as a part of his salary. When he's poor, they only have it once a year, but if his salary's good, or he's got property of his own, so he can stand it, they go for him twice."

"Pat, my boy," said Sol, "I've been to donations all my life, and I never heard 'em so well explained before. But we must consider the subject of those pies. Mince pies 'll keep all the Winter."

"Not in the wrong kind of company," said Van.

"Our company, for instance."

"Or a donation party."

"Van, I'm afraid those pies 'll be safe from the likes of us. They'll go from the oven to the big swing shelf in the cellar, and the key 'll be turned on them. Alas, for us!"

"That's a terribly creaky lock to that outside cellar door," musingly returned Van. "I've heard it opened. We must put in some oil, right away."

"Oil is good for locks. But it won't creak without a key."

"Never you mind about that, Sol. We'll not spend this Winter in Bunkerville without any mince pies."

"She'll have some made for Thanksgiving dinner."

"Oh, that's too long to wait. So is Christmas and New Year's, and next Fourth of July."

"We won't wait, Van, my boy. I've great confidence in you. Patrick, we will attend to the donation pies for you."

[To be continued.]

"Three Boys" was commenced in No. 613.

BEAR ADVENTURES OF SENATOR FOSTER, OF VERMONT.

SENATOR FOSTER, who lived for many years at Brighton, Vt., though not a large man, had great strength, being in the woods one day, he saw two bear cubs lying on the ground, with their noses turned toward each other. He had a gun, but he wanted them alive. Placing his gun in a position where he could swing it under his arm, after he had secured his prey, he crept softly to the sleeping animals and suddenly grasped each one by the nose. He expected in this manner to hold them so firmly that they could not squeal, but one of them slipped from his grasp. Nothing daunted, Jack caught him by the hind leg, secured his gun, and started for home on the run.

The cub whose nose was free set up a loud cry, and the old mother soon made her appearance. Jack heard her crashing through the bush after him. It was but fifty rods to the clearing, and he had but ten rods the start. It was a case of life and death, but he wouldn't give up the cubs.

There was a high log fence in the edge of the clearing, and fortunately a large log lay alongside. With one tremendous bound Jack leaped on the log. Another muscular bound carried him over the fence into the field. The bear was on the fence just as Jack struck the ground. But she hesitated a moment about following him in the open field, and he sped away so fast that she finally turned back into the woods, and Jack escaped.

On another occasion this Nimrod was in the woods unarmed, one March day, when the snow was six feet deep, and the surface so soft that no speed was to be had without snow-shoes, a pair of which Jack had on. A bear which had just awakened from its Winter nap made a dive at him. He leaped away from the brute, but went deep into snow, and Bruin was upon him. The battle began, and each beast rolling over each other in the desperate struggle. As often as the bear tried to seize him with her teeth, or overpower him with the fatal hug, Jack would always save himself by kicking her on the nose with the snow-shoes.

Finally, with one fierce plunge of claws and teeth, the brute fastened upon Jack, and, failing to hold him, tore off almost all his clothing at a single swoop; but, fortunately, just at that moment he hit the tip of her nose a most powerful kick. A blow on the end of the nose causes pain to acute as to disable a bear for a time, and it had that effect in this case. The brute gave back a little, and while she was wincing under the pain Jack regained his feet and got several steps away. His assailant started after him again, but the snow was soft, and she almost buried herself at every step, while Jack walked on the surface and escaped. So his snow-shoes, which rendered him a clumsy fighter, finally saved his life.

ROY, THE RANGER.

A Tale of the Mexican War.

CHAPTER XVI.

(Continued from page 234.)

THE Mexican captain, not being familiar with the English language, could not understand Captain Hawkins's comment.

He continued his communication, Roy translating as before.

"The respect of humanity, acknowledged at the present age by all civilized nations, doubtless, imposes upon me the duty of mitigating the disasters of war."

"What verbosity!" ejaculated Captain Hawkins.

"This principle, which Mexicans observe above all other nations," continued the officer, "obliges me to summon you—as all your efforts will be useless—to surrender—in order to avoid, by a capitulation, the entire destruction of all the soldiers under your command."

"They feel pretty sure of taking us, eh, Roy? Tell him to hurry up."

The officer could only proceed in the grandiloquent style he had at first adopted, and continued:

"You will thus afford me the pleasure of complying with the mild and benevolent wishes above expressed, which distinguish the character of my countrymen, whilst I, at the same time, fulfill the most imperious of the duties which my country requires for the offenses committed against it."

Having received this communication, Captain Hawkins requested the messenger to await ten minutes for his answer, and then returned to the fort and called a council of his officers, and asked the opinion of each, beginning with the youngest.

They unanimously resolved to defend the place to the last extremity.

Captain Hawkins then returned the following answer, which Roy delivered to the officers with the flag of truce:

"Your humane communication being duly received, after the consideration due to its importance, I respectfully decline to surrender my forces to you."

On the reception of this reply, General Arista opened his batteries with more activity than before; and a hail of iron and fire was hurled into the fort.

The night closed darkly in around the beleaguered fort. Captain Hawkins held an earnest consultation with Walker and Roy.

"Though I have no idea of surrendering," he said, "it seems impossible to resist the overwhelming numbers of the foe much longer. General Taylor should know of our situation, and aid us if he can."

"That's what I think," answered Walker. "I had better try to reach the general to-night. What's your opinion, Roy?" he added, appealing to his young lieutenant.

It need scarcely be said here, or now, that Captain Walker had the highest opinion of Roy's sagacity, and that his approval was sufficient to warrant the undertaking of any enterprise, notwithstanding its daring peril.

"We had better try to break through the enemy's lines to-night," replied Roy. "It is a dark night, moonless, and the prairie is wrapped in gloom. We might gain the chaparral by a sudden dash."

Captain Hawkins shook his head doubtfully.

"I noticed at sunset that bodies of their lancers were patrolling the prairie in all directions, as far as the eye could see," he said. "They expect some such attempt upon our part, and are prepared to intercept it, I think. Let's take a look at the prospect from the rampart. We can judge better then whether it is feasible."

Roy and Walker followed Captain Hawkins to the rampart of the fort, and looked out upon the plain.

The air was thick and murky. Not a breath of wind appeared to be stirring. The flag hung limply to the staff.

An almost impenetrable gloom was spread over the plain; but through this gloom gleamed lights that looked like fiery eyes, very long, at the river's bank on the right, and continued to its bank on the left, forming the arc of a circle about the fort.

Captain Hawkins pointed these out to his companions.

"You see," he said, "those are the watch-fires of the enemy. Can you hope to pass between them, even in this gloom?"

"Yes, captain," answered Roy, confidently. "They are wide apart—a gun-shot at least. We might easily glide between two of them."

The captain shook his head.

"They have their sentries posted, be sure," he rejoined; "and, in the still night, the sound of your horses' hoofs would apprise them of your coming."

"We must muffle our horses' feet."

Captain Hawkins looked surprised.

"What a head you have for ideas!" he cried. "Where did you learn so many of the tricks of war, Roy?"

"From books, captain," answered Roy, with that modesty that he always adopted when speaking of himself. "I have been a great reader in my time, young as I am, and accounts of wars and battles have been my great delight. I have an idea I was born to be a soldier, I am so fond of fighting," he added, laughingly.

"There's no doubt of that, Roy!" exclaimed Walker. "You'll live to be a major-general yet."

"I hope I may, but that's a long day ahead. Now, about muffling our horses' hoofs, to deaden the sound of their footfalls. I borrow my device from the French general, Montmorenci, who tried to send relief to Count Saint Quentin, when it was besieged by the Spaniards under the command of the Savoy Duke, Phillibert Emmanuel. He shod the horses' feet with felt."

"But we have no felt here," interposed Captain Hawkins.

"True; but there are plenty of blankets that will do as well."

"Go on; I see that you are fertile in expedients."

"The blankets can be cut into pieces and tied around the horses' feet."

"A capital idea!"

"Of course it is!" added Walker. He's full of just such ideas. He's a Yankee, and as shrewd as any of that calculating race."

"Another device might be brought in play at the same time," continued Roy. "These Mexicans are very superstitious; we might adopt a costume that would bewilder and confound them, making us appear like a troop of phantoms gliding over the plain; besides, we shall need some distinguishing badge, that we may be able to recognize each other in the gloom, if we should be separated by any accident."

"Another good idea. But what kind of a badge do you mean?"

"At the siege of Florence, when Colonna led his chosen troops on a midnight sortie, he made them put white shirts on over their armor."

"Good Lord, Roy! you don't expect to find any white shirts here, do you?" cried Captain Hawkins.

"I don't believe there's half a dozen whole ones in all the garrison."

Roy laughed, and replied:

"We can make the blankets serve as substitutes for the shirts. They are near enough white."

"Dirty-white!"

"They'll do. We can cut three holes in them, for our head and arms, and wear them as the Mexicans do their serapes."

"Upon my word! I think these precautions might enable you to pass through the enemy's lines!" exclaimed Captain Hawkins.

"Shall we try it?" questioned Walker.

The captain deliberated for a moment, and then answered:

"Yes, I think we may as well. We must have help, and that is our only chance to get it."

"Then we'll make preparations at once."

Tom and the rangers were summoned, and all were soon busy under Roy's instructions, Walker leaving the directions to him.

The horses' hoofs were muffled in pieces of blanket, and each ranger prepared one for himself, cutting holes in the centre to admit the head and arms.

When they had put these on and were mounted, they presented a singular appearance, as the blankets hid their forms, and half-concealed their horses.

"The Mexicans will never know what to make of you," cried Captain Hawkins, as he surveyed their grotesque appearance. "Be cautious, though. Remember how much depends on the success of your mission."

"We shall not risk a fight if we can avoid it," answered Walker. "Good-night, captain, and hope for the best."

The rangers filed silently through the sally-port, and emerged upon the plain.

Not a sound of a hoof-fall could be heard.

Captain Hawkins watched them anxiously from the parapet; but they were soon lost to his view. They melted away in the gloom as if they had indeed been phantoms.

The captain maintained his post upon the rampart long after he had lost sight of them.

Ten minutes thus passed away.

They were the longest ten minutes that Captain Hawkins had ever experienced in his life.

Then came the sudden report of a musket, the sound made faint by distance. Another followed, and then another.

Bugle-notes rose upon the air, sounding "To arms!"

He could see figures moving confusedly around the watch-fires.

For fifteen minutes this confused movement was kept up, and then all grew quiet again.

Captain Hawkins heaved a sigh of bitter disappointment.

"Poor fellows! they are captured," he cried; and then he retired sadly to his quarters.

The night passed away without any further alarm.

At noon the next day the sound of bugles and the firing of muskets aroused the garrison, and each man hurried to his post.

But no attack was made, and they passed the day as they had done others, until late in the afternoon, when a heavy cannonade was heard in the direction of Point Isabel.

All knew whence it proceeded.

General Taylor was advancing against the foe. The sound was electrical.

In the excitement of that moment military discipline was forgotten; and leaping on the parapets, amid the thick iron hail from the enemy's batteries, officers and men sent up one deafening shout that echoed loudly along the banks of the Rio Grande.

Then, with painful anxiety, each one listened for a repetition, and as the noises of the tumult grew louder and louder, their feelings were wound up to the highest pitch.

Toward evening, a Mexican deserter came to the fort and reported to Captain Hawkins that General Taylor had engaged Arista's army at Palo Alto.

All night the garrison was in a restless state of excitement, so that the fire from the cannon in Matamoras received but little attention.

Another morning brought fresh sounds of conflict. General Taylor's cannon was again heard, and before sunset masses of fugitives broke through the chaparral, and dashed madly toward the river.

Then the last sound of cannon died within the City of Matamoras, and following it arose one wild shout of victory from the little garrison.

The long guns of the fort were turned upon the fugitives, still further demoralizing their flight.

The east bank of the river was abandoned by the Mexicans, and as their shattered columns gained the other bank, General Taylor's advance guard appeared.

The siege of Fort Brown was over.

Never had a defense been more gallantly made.

"But where are the rangers?" cried Captain Walker.

A shout answered him, and he saw Roy on his horse Frank.

CHAPTER XVII.

FRESH DANGER.

I WILL now recount what had befallen Roy and his comrades, and how General Taylor came so opportunely to the relief of Fort Brown.

When Captain Walker, Roy, Tom Meade and the three rangers left the fort, walking their horses slowly out upon the gloomy plain, they formed into couples, Walker and Roy taking the lead.

"Keep close together, and don't utter a word above a whisper," was Walker's caution.

They cantered quietly forward for five minutes, Roy scanning the watch-fires carefully as they advanced.

"Which two shall we try to go between, Roy?" inquired Walker.

"Those two; they appear to be the furthest apart," answered Roy, pointing them out.

"All right!" rejoined Walker, trusting to Roy's keenness of vision, as he always did.

As they drew near the watch-fires they perceived a sentinel pacing his round in front of each, pacing listlessly back and forth, with his musket carelessly thrown over his shoulder.

Walker reined up, and the little troop stopped.

"I say, Roy, do you think we can get through?" he whispered. "Those fellows will be sure to see us."

"I expect they will," responded Roy; "and that was why I suggested this blanket business. My idea is to dash between the two fires at full speed. They will never be able to make out what we are, and before they can recover from their surprise we shall be out of sight—safe in the shadow of the chaparral."

"It's the only way. Do you think we can find the path?"

"We must trust to luck for that; but I think I can find it."

"Keep close together, boys, and put your horses to the gallop when I give the word," said Walker. "We are going to make a bold dash. Don't stop for bullets, unless they drop you—keep straight on, and trust to steel if anybody gets in our way. Ready—forward!"

The well-trained horses obeyed the touch of the spurs, and the little troop swept swiftly forward, going midway between the fires.

BEAR ADVENTURES OF SENATOR FOSTER, OF VERMONT.—HE CAPTURES TWO LIVELY CUBS.—SEE PAGE 251.

The horses' hoofs, deadened by the pieces of blanket, gave out but little sound, but the prairie trembled beneath their tread.

One Mexican sentinel felt this vibration in the turf beneath his feet, and paused in his walk amazedly, glancing around him to learn the cause. He saw some shadowy forms pass swiftly by him, but he could not tell what they were—human, bird or beast.

His blood chilled, and his hair bristled upon his head, but with soldierly instinct he clapped his musket to his shoulder and fired.

This alarmed the other sentinel, who also discharged his musket. Then ensued a scene of wild confusion amongst the Mexican pickets. Muskets were discharged at random, and the bugles sounded a shrill alarm; but before the camp was fully aroused the rangers had gained the shelter of the chaparral, and were laughing at the success of their ruse.

"Well done!" exclaimed Walker. "By Mars, the God of War, Roy, but your trick has succeeded to a charm."

"How they did waste their powder and bullets!" cried Toss. "Now, if we can only find our way to old Rough-and-Ready we will be all right."

"That's just what we are going to do," answered Roy; "but we'll have a tough time getting through the chaparral, I'm thinking. If we can't find the path we will have to camp in the woods until morning."

"I had rather go on," said Walker.

"So had I; but it will not pay to follow a blind trail until morning. Let's see what we can do."

They searched, and succeeded, after much loss of time, in finding a path, though they were not sure it was the right one.

"Do you think this is it?" asked Walker.

"It is impossible for me to say," replied Roy. "The gloom prevents me from recognizing any familiar object; but I can trust to my horse, Frank. Let me take the lead. He will show us the way through."

"A good idea—in fact, all your ideas are good. Go ahead. In the words of my old friend, Colonel Crockett—whom the Mexican's butchered—'Be sure you're right, then go ahead!'"

"I can go ahead fast enough, but I would not assert that I am always in the right," answered Roy, laughingly.

So saying, he took the lead, and the others followed in single file.

Daylight broke upon them whilst they proceeded, as Roy had left Frank to pick his own way, and that sagacious animal walked, reserving his strength for more active work, probably, when he should reach the open prairie again.

When the morning light came struggling down through the branches of the trees Roy took an eager survey of the wood around them.

"This is not the right path!" he exclaimed, suddenly.

This exclamation brought them to a sudden halt.

"You are right, Roy," answered Walker, gazing about him earnestly. "This is a strange road to me. It don't appear to be the one through which that Mexican bandit guided us."

"It is not."

"That's so!" affirmed Toss Meade. "We were never here before."

"What shall we do?" questioned Walker.

"In the first place, we may as well take off these blankets, which have served us for such ghostly drapery," replied Roy. "They might incommode us in case of an attack, and they are not likely to frighten anybody by daylight."

"Not much."

"Then I should advise that we go on and follow this path to the end. It must lead us somewhere."

"There's no doubt of that."

"And I have an idea that it will lead us in the direction we wish to go. There must be more than one road through this chaparral, and as we entered from the river side, the termination of this path must be the broad prairie that sweeps to Point Isabel."

"That is a very reasonable calculation."

"We must be careful when we reach that prairie, however, for I would not be surprised to find the enemy in full force there."

"Yes, I fancy we shall have trouble there. But let's stow away our blankets and push on."

The blankets were taken off and folded up, and placed upon the saddles, and the march was resumed.

By the time the sun was an hour high they reached the edge of the chaparral, for the light enabled them to travel at a much better speed than when plodding their way through the darkness, and they found that Roy's surmise was correct, the broad and open prairie lay before them.

They emerged from the trees and halted on the verge of the plain.

"Here we are!" exclaimed Walker. "But let's take a good look at the lay of the land before we start. Once beyond the shelter of these trees, we must trust to the speed of our horses if we are discovered and pursued."

Roy took a critical survey of the prospect before them.

To stand upon the verge of a prairie and gaze over its broad expanse is like standing upon the beach and looking seaward.

In both cases the view seems illimitable. The long prairie-grass swaying before the wind bears a strong resemblance to the billows of the ocean, and the little clumps of trees that dot the broad plain at intervals in what is called a wooded-prairie look like islands at sea.

Before them here, however, no isolated groups of trees broke the monotony of the dead level. There was nothing but grass, flowers and sage-bushes.

BEAR ADVENTURES OF SENATOR FOSTER, OF VERMONT.—A CASE OF LIFE AND DEATH—BUT HE WOULDN'T GIVE UP THE CUBS.

Over this broad plain, as far as Roy's vision could reach, no living thing appeared in sight.

"I guess it's safe enough to make a dash for the point, captain," he told Walker. "I cannot perceive any signs of danger."

"Nor I," responded Walker. "Can you see anything, Toss?"

"Neither hair nor hide."

"Forward, then!"

They rode on in the same order as before, in couples, Walker and Roy being in advance.

They made good speed, and were half way across the plain when Roy gave the signal of danger.

The nature of the ground changed as they advanced; the prairie became more rolling, bayonet trees were seen with their bristly heads, and clumps of trees became numerous

"Halt!" cried Walker, at a sign from Roy.

This command was instantly obeyed.

"What is it, Roy?" continued Walker. "I don't see anything."

"Look there, between those clumps of trees! See! there are horsemen deploying in that direction. See! there's a whole regiment, I should judge by their numbers. Don't you see the points of their lances glisten in the sun?"

"Yes, yes! Do you think they see us, Roy?" inquired Roy, anxiously.

"Not yet; but they will if we keep on the direction we are going, for they are right in our track. If we make a divergence to the left we might avoid them."

"We'll try it."

"What's the matter?" cried Toss.

"Never you mind; you'll find out fast enough. Keep your eye peeled for a fight. Forward!"

"Great Jehoshaphat!" grumbled Toss. "I've done nothing but keep my eye peeled ever since I have been in this consarned country!"

The rangers now rode forward with unabated speed, but they swerved strongly to the left in the hope of avoiding the foe.

But the broken nature of the plain concealed the movements of the lancers, and when it grew more level they found themselves brought to the full view of a squadron a thousand strong.

The sound of the enemy's bugles told them that they were discovered.

To have attempted to contend against such odds would have been madness.

Flight was the only hope of our little party. By the speed of their horses they must escape or be taken.

The spurs were freely plied. They rode at full speed, for they knew they rode for life, but the lancers followed fast and furiously.

"Jumping Jehoshaphat! we're in for it now!" exclaimed Toss Meade. "The pitcher that goes often to the well gets broken at last! I feel very much like that unhappy piece of crockery just now."

But Toss urged his horse vigorously forward, notwithstanding his misgivings.

The number of the foe enabled them to circle around the fugitives and hem them in. Walker soon became conscious of this disagreeable fact.

At his command the rangers slackened their headlong speed, and unsling their carbines.

"We'll have to fight our way through, Roy, for they've headed us off," he said. "They've got us in a tight place this time. I'm fraid we're caught."

"It looks like it," answered Roy. "But something may save us yet."

CHAPTER XVIII.

PALO ALTO.

"FALL into line!" commanded Walker. "We must push on straight ahead, and fight our way through. That's our only chance."

Abreast, with carbines ready, the little band of rangers advanced upon the foe.

The lancers uttered exulting yells, and encircled them in with leveled lances.

Before they could close in the deadly combat that seemed imminent there came a shrill bugle-blast, a ringing shout, and the lancers in front of the rangers scattered suddenly; whilst through their shattered ranks rode a troop of dragoons, headed by an officer, with his long, flowing, dark hair tucked behind his ears.

He clove through the ranks of the lancers as a gallant bark cleaves the billows of the sea, and rode straight toward Walker's little band, his men following him, and slashing vigorously right and left at the lancers with their bright sabres.

A cry of joy and welcome burst from Walker's

BEAR ADVENTURES OF SENATOR FOSTER, OF VERMONT.—THE MOTHER BEAR MAKES HER APPEARANCE.

band as he saw them coming. "Hurrah!" he shouted. "It's May!—May and his dragoons. Forward! and join him."

The dragoons and rangers combined forces and turned upon the foe; but the lancers were already in full retreat.

Although May had but a hundred men with him, his first charge had satisfied him that he was too much for them, despite the disparity of his force.

A volley from the carbines of the rangers completed the lancers' rout, and soon only their dead were left upon the field.

"How did you happen to be here?" Walker asked Colonel May, when the pursuit was over.

"I was looking for your party," answered this daring cavalry-officer. "General Taylor sent me out. He expected you back to the Point before this time, and as you did not come he feared something had happened to you, and so he told me to take some of my men and look for you."

"You found me at just the right time."

"So it appears."

"How did you leave the fort? We know it has been attacked."

"How did you know that?"

"We heard the sound of the cannon."

"Ah, yes! I had forgotten that. It can hold out until General Taylor gets there."

"He will not be long in going. But we shall have a fight before we get there."

"Is that so?"

"Yes. The enemy have encamped right over there, six or seven thousand strong."

"But they are not there now?"

"No; I found the camp deserted as I came by this morning."

"Where have they gone?"

"That is more than I can say; but you may be sure they will wait for us, and give us battle somewhere between the Point and the Fort."

"I hope they will."

"So do I. The first battle in a war always counts strong. If we can defeat them—and there isn't much doubt of that—it will have a demoralizing effect upon them in all subsequent battles. But let's hurry on. The general will be anxious to hear your report of matters at the fort."

They proceeded with all speed to Point Isabel, where Captain Walker was warmly welcomed by General Taylor, and the general was much gratified to hear of the brave defense of the fort.

He resolved to march at once to its relief, and orders were issued to that effect.

An eagerness to meet the foe pervaded the entire army. At three o'clock that afternoon the march was commenced.

The march across the broad and rolling prairie presented a singular and picturesque sight.

Long files of troops in exact order, the flying artillery (that arm of the service that was destined to win so much success in the war), heavy trains, wagons slowly moving, drawn by sturdy but sluggish oxen, contrasting with the glitter and pomp of military array, all formed a picture never before witnessed by these Texan wilds.

Roy's breast was filled with a martial enthusiasm as he gazed upon this.

"Pride, pomp, and circumstance of glorious war."

After proceeding five miles the army halted and encamped for the night.

During this bivouac Roy, being introduced by Captain Walker, made the acquaintance of the officers whose names fill so bright a page in the history of this war—some of them destined to die in

BEAR ADVENTURES OF SENATOR FOSTER, OF VERMONT.—A ROUGH-AND-TUMBLE IN THE SNOW.

BEAR ADVENTURES OF SENATOR FOSTER, OF VERMONT.—A BLOW ON THE NOSE.

BEAR ADVENTURES OF SENATOR FOSTER, OF VERMONT.—THE SENATOR SAVED BY HIS SNOW-SHOES.

ROY THE RANGER.—"CAPTAIN HAWKINS THEN RETURNED THE ANSWER, WHICH ROY DELIVERED TO THE OFFICERS WITH THE FLAG OF TRUCE."—SEE PAGE 251.

tle first battle; but no thought of doom marred the hilarity of that night-camp upon the prairie.

There was McIntosh; Ringgold, of the artillery; May, with his long hair, as brave a soldier as ever led a charge; Morris, Churchill, Allen, Garland, Ker, Twiggs, Childs, Duncan, Montgomery and Belknap.

They greeted Roy as a brother-in-arms, who had already won deserved fame, and their praise was a stimulant to further exertion.

"I will do more than I have yet done," he told Toss Meade, as they wrapped themselves in their blankets and lay down to sleep.

"The only trouble with you, Roy, is that you try to do too much," replied Toss, with a true, friendly remonstrance. "It's a good thing to be up to snuff, but it would be bad to get snuffed out."

But Roy merely laughed, as he generally did at Toss's sage remarks, and resigned himself to sleep.

At daybreak Captain Walker went on a scout with his rangers. He had reorganized his company, and had now some fifty men; but they were of better material than those he had first led against the Mexicans with such disastrous results.

They were specially designed for scouting, and Roy went in advance with ten men.

They found the enemy's camp deserted, and returned and reported this intelligence to General Taylor.

The general supposed that the enemy had retreated in order to avoid a battle, but this opinion proved erroneous, as we shall see.

The march was resumed soon after sunrise, and the army soon reached some thick mesquite and chaparral thickets, and passing through them, they beheld the Mexican army directly in front of them, drawn up in battle array, and presenting a front of nearly a mile and a half in extent.

A murmur of satisfaction arose from the American troops.

They had begun to think that this Mexican army was a will-o'-the-wisp, that they might follow, but never overtake.

General Taylor did not, however, lead his men directly to the attack.

They had had a long, dry march, and he wished to refresh them before engaging the foe.

Old Rough-and-ready, despite the name he had gained, always took his time before giving battle. A more careful or skillful general never commanded a host.

He deliberately formed his troops into columns, and then, grounding arms, permitted them to go, half a company at a time, to some neighboring pools of water, to slake their thirst and fill their canteens.

During this the general rode along the line of battle he had formed, to survey the command.

Every man appeared good.

The general nodded his head approvingly, and then turned his attention to the foe.

Walker's rangers were in advance to act as skirmishers.

The general rode up to Walker and Roy, who were sitting on their horses, waiting for the order to advance. They saluted as he drew near.

"Captain Walker, can you form any idea of the number of the foe?" he inquired.

"Judging from the front they present, I should set their number, at a rough guess, somewhere in the vicinity of six thousand men."

The general swept the field with his glass.

"Hah! I should say about that number myself," he rejoined. "But have they any artillery, and how much? I cannot make out. The long prairie-grass hides it if they have."

"I cannot see any," answered Walker, also applying a field-glass to his eye.

"It would greatly aid my plans if I could discover how many pieces of cannon they have, and where they are," observed General Taylor, earnestly scanning the enemy's position with his glass.

"Let me go, general, and find out for you!" cried Roy, eagerly.

The general dropped his glass from his eye and turned a surprised glance upon Roy.

"You, my lad?" he said, and he could but smile at he noted the enthusiasm on that young face. "You are determined to distinguish yourself, I see."

"Let him go," said Walker. "If any man in this army can find out, he can—and I'll go with him."

The general hesitated, and then used his glass again in another survey of the enemy's front.

"It is really essential to know the strength of their artillery," he said, but more to himself than to them. "It's a dangerous reconnoitring feat, Captain Walker," he added, "but if you think you can accomplish it——"

"We can try, general. We've got good horseflesh beneath us, and we'll risk it—if you say so."

General Taylor bowed his head acquiescently. The information he desired was of the greatest importance, as it might decide the fate of the battle he was about to fight, and yet he felt almost as if he was sending these two young men to their doom; but generals are obliged to stifle such feelings in their breasts.

Toss was left in command of the rangers, and Captain Walker and Roy cantered gently toward the foe.

"Great Jehoshaphat!" muttered Toss, in his discontented fashion. "There's the pitcher going to the well again! They used to call him 'Roy the Reckless,' when we were boys together in old Boston; but what would they call him now? And Captain Walker's just as bad as he is. Well, well, he'll stop a bullet one of these days, and that'll end it!"

Toss shook his head in a melancholy manner over this reflection. He was disturbed by General Taylor riding quickly up to him, as if a new idea had suddenly occurred to him.

"Lieutenant!" he cried, "forward with your whole troop and support your officers, and draw the fire from the enemy's artillery, if possible. I must know where it is."

"Attention—forward—march!" ordered Toss, and the rangers moved forward in good order.

"Great, jumping Jehoshaphat! this pitcher has got to go the well, too!" muttered Toss.

When Walker and Roy discovered that Toss and the whole troop of rangers were following them they halted and waited for them to come up.

"Hallo, Toss! what are you about?" cried Walker, surprisedly. "Who sent you here?"

"Orders from the commander-in-chief," responded Toss, grimly. "We've come here to catch a few cannon-balls, if the enemy will only be kind enough to send them this way."

"What the deuce do you mean?"

"We're to draw the fire of the enemy's artillery, and then we'll know where it is, don't you see."

Both Walker and Roy laughed heartily at this.

"There's no doubt of that!" cried Walker. Then he added, to Roy, "I see how it is; the general was afraid we were taking too great a risk. Well, come on, and be ready to dodge the cannon-balls when they come."

They accordingly advanced, but the cannon-balls did not come. The enemy reserved their fire, not appearing to consider this small troop of sufficient importance to attack.

Captain Walker halted his rangers.

"This is near enough," he said. "We are within range, and should have had a shot before now. It looks as if they had a trap ready, and are only waiting for us to walk into it. I don't care about sacrificing the lives of the whole of my command needlessly. Can you see any cannon, Roy?"

"Not yet."

Captain Walker deliberated in some perplexity.

"What's to be done, Roy?" he asked, appealing to him, as he generally did in all emergencies.

"Let me go forward alone and reconnoitre," answered Roy.

"No; we'll go together. I've got the field-glass that I borrowed from Colonel May. Keep the men here until we return, Toss."

"All right."

Walker and Roy rode swiftly forward to within eighty yards of the Mexican line, the foe looking upon them with astonishment.

Here they had a full view of the enemy's order of battle.

Captain Walker surveyed the whole line with the field-glass, and then gave it to Roy, who scanned the plain eagerly in his turn.

"Do you see their cannon, Roy?" inquired Walker.

"Yes."

"How many do you make?"

"Ten."

"I only saw eight."

"There are ten. Two are in the copse of wood away down there to the left."

"They have tried to mask them?"

"Yes."

"Ah! that is why I didn't see them."

Two Mexican officers rode out from their line and came cantering toward them.

"Here come two of the Mexicans," said Walker.

"They look as if they were coming to inquire what we are about here."

"Cover them with your pistols."

The moment Walker drew his pistols the Mexicans halted.

"Ah! they've thought better of it!" exclaimed Walker.

Their very temerity seemed to act as a safeguard. It was strange that the Mexicans held their fire.

The rangers were within musket-range, and a volley would most assuredly have proved fatal to them.

"Let's take a look further down the field," suggested Roy.

"All right—go it!"

They cantered along the line to its other end, made another examination there, rejoined their company, and returned to their own line.

Roy reported the number of the enemy's cannon to General Taylor, and after-events proved that he had been accurate in his observation.

"He has a fine eye," General Taylor observed to Captain Walker.

"An eye like a hawk, general; nothing escapes it," responded Walker.

This daring reconnoissance elicited the praise of the entire army.

TALES WITH BOYS ABOUT FOREIGN LANDS.—ENCAMPMENT OF AUSTRALIAN NATIVES.—SEE PAGE 254.

The battle now began.

The enemy opened their batteries, which were immediately answered by all of General Taylor's artillery.

The Mexican fire was increased by one gun after another, until their whole line was one blaze of flame, and the battle-ground was enveloped in clouds of smoke.

Both armies had resolved on victory, and both behaved in a manner as if determined to deserve it.

But the Mexican artillery was not well served; they aimed many of their cannon too high, and pointed others at their opponents' guns instead of their men.

Their first fire, therefore, did little execution; while Ringgold's and Churchill's artillery soon dispersed the cavalry proceeding against them, and Captain Duncan mowed down scores of their infantry.

Colonel May's dragoons supported Duncan.

After the artillery had led the battle for some time, about a thousand lancers, with two field-pieces, were observed moving through the chaparral, on the right of General Taylor's army, either to attack that flank or make an attempt upon the baggage train.

The Fifth Infantry were ordered to repel this movement.

They were thrown into a hollow-square, and finally awaited the onset. They were supported by Lieutenant Ridgely, with a section of Ringgold's artillery and Captain Walker's Texan volunteers.

The enemy rushed on in one deep mass; but the artillery plowed through their ranks, crushing man and horse beneath its iron hail, and overwhelming the survivors in dire confusion.

The Texan Volunteers charged the hesitating foe and completed their repulse.

The battle now became general, and raged over the entire field with terrible grandeur; companies were encountering and wheeling; cavalry charging; flying and rallying from point to point; while amidst the confused din of cannon, and shouts, and trampling steeds, was heard the wailings of the wounded and the groans of the dying.

The continued discharge of artillery fired the grass of the prairie, which was at that season as dry as chaff.

The flame, small at first, spread rapidly on every side, until sheets of fire, accompanied by thick smoke, crept along the surface, and at length, growing fiercer as it continued, the whole space between the two armies was covered by a wide ocean, as it were, of fire, that roared and tossed its tongues of flame up to heaven.

The sounds of the strife were lost, and both armies suspended the work of death.

General Taylor availed himself of this interval to form a new line of battle.

After the lapse of an hour the action recommenced.

In a little time the fire from the American guns grew most destructive; but, although long openings were made in their ranks at every discharge, the Mexicans sustained the severe cannonade with a fortitude and persistency that astonished their antagonists.

The enemy's principal efforts were directed against the eighteen-pounders and the guns under Major Ringgold.

Around these swept a storm of iron-hail, which picked off the men one by one, and rattled fearfully against the cannon.

Here Ringgold received his death-wound, being struck from his horse by a cannon-ball.

As night approached the fire of the enemy slackened, and it ceased on both sides with the setting of the sun.

General Taylor's army lay all night upon their arms, on nearly the same position that the enemy had occupied in the morning.

The battle of Palo Alto was won.

CHAPTER XIX.

RESACA DE LA PALMA.

DURING the night the two armies slept quietly, almost in sight of each other.

The night was serene and beautiful, the moon casting a soft light upon every object around.

Roy, lying stretched upon his blanket, could scarcely realize the day of carnage through which he had passed as he gazed upon the calm serenity of the night.

His company had suffered some loss, but Captain Walker, Toss Meade and himself had come out of the strife unwounded.

General Taylor held a council with his officers, and it was decided to continue the advance.

Captain Walker, who had formed one of the council, informed Roy of this.

"More work for us on the morrow," he said.

"That is what I expected," replied Roy; "and that is what we are here for."

"We've taken through tickets for the halls of the Montezumas, and we're bound to go through," added Toss, joeosely.

"That's the talk! Why, Toss, you are feeling better."

"What's the odds when you can't help yourself? I'll never see old Boston again."

"Pshaw! don't feel that way. But what's the odds? as you say. Man can die but once, you know."

"Yes, I do know it," responded Toss, scratching his head, reflectively. "That's the awkward part of the business. If a fellow could die two or three times, now, he might get used to it."

This reasoning provoked a laugh from his comrades, and then the three resigned themselves to slumber, to recuperate their strength for the morrow.

Early in the morning General Taylor formed his line of battle and moved forward.

The Texan rangers held the post of danger, leading the advance.

Far in the distance the host of the enemy could be seen, moving slowly toward the chaparral which bounded the view of the eastern horizon.

Roy rode over the recent battle-field his eyes were pained at the ghastly spectacle it presented.

Where the artillery had performed its fearful office men and horses, shattered and mutilated, were lying thickly piled upon each other.

The wolf and vulture were reveling upon the mangled remains, but were scared away from their dread feast by the rangers' approach.

Arms, trappings, provisions and clothing strewed the field; the salt prairie was red with blood; and the gallant spirit of the young volunteer, that the shock of battle could not daunt, felt sick and child-like as he gazed upon the dead and dying on that red battle-field.

The duty before him soon distracted his thoughts from this sad subject.

The rangers had been ordered to reconnoitre the enemy's new position, and for this purpose they were strengthened by some light companies under command of Captain McCall and Captain Smith, and a squadron of dragoons, led by Lieutenant Pleasanton.

This addition made the advance-guard some two hundred strong.

On approaching the chaparral Captain Walker became satisfied that the enemy occupied it in force, but he still continued to advance.

He entered the chaparral, and found a company of Mexican infantry drawn up to receive him. These he dispersed with a single volley, killing two of their number.

But, as if this had summoned them, the thicket instantly swarmed with foes. A concealed battery opened a heavy fire upon them, and the rangers were obliged to fall back, leaving some of their comrades dead upon the banks of a ravine called Resaca de la Palma.

Walker retreated in good order, until he could place his command in a good position, and then sent three messengers to inform General Taylor that the enemy were in front in force.

The position chosen by the enemy for the second day's battle was a most admirable one for defensive warfare.

The ravine known as Resaca de la Palma is nearly two hundred feet wide, and four feet deep. It is crossed at right angles by the road to Matamoras.

The ridges on each side are covered with dense rows of chaparral, utterly impenetrable to horse, and defying every weapon save the bayonet.

In the thicket nearest the Americans, as well as in the ravine below, the enemy lay in double rows; and another line of them extended through the chaparral on the opposite bank.

Three batteries were placed so as to completely sweep the road, their fires at the same time crossing each other.

Through such a passage, defended by six thousand veteran soldiers, must General Taylor's little army of less than two thousand men pass.

"We've got a tough job before us," said Captain Walker to Roy, after he had sent his messengers to General Taylor.

"It looks like it," answered Roy.

"We shall have to dismount and act as infantry. We can do nothing on horseback here."

"You are right, captain. This must be a hand-to-hand encounter. Steel must win this day for us, not lead. We must carry their position at the point of the bayonet."

"We will. Let's be ready when the word comes to more forward."

The rangers dismounted, and their horses were placed under charge of ten of their number in a hollow of the chaparral.

Scarcely was this performed when Ridgley's battery, with three regiments of artillery, advanced to begin the attack.

Soon long streams of shot were flying between the armies, amid reports that shook the lonely ravine for miles around, and echoed back to the shores of the Rio Grande.

The action became general as the different divisions of the army pressed forward to the attack.

Through the smoke of the battle companies might be seen gliding like phantoms from one position to another, discharging rapid volleys of bullets, or meeting the charges of cavalry.

The artillery cut and mowed its way through entire regiments, and so terribly did Ridgley's batteries operate upon the Mexican lancers that they were obliged to retire out of range.

[To be continued.]

"Roy the Ranger" was commenced in No. 61.

EASY LESSONS IN PHONOGRAPHY, OR SHORT-HAND.

IN-HOOK.

WE have given the very useful principle of halving letter-signs to add t or d. At this stage we may be said to be treading on the heels of the Reporting Style. When we promise you attention in that method, do not imagine that the past or present lessons are any the less important. For the reporting style involves all we have said, will have to say, and a little more. But what we say now is just as necessary to your knowledge of the Art as what will be said, just as the alphabet, and spelling, are necessary to the terribly dry read. We are nearing the end of the foundation rules for the simpler style of Short-hand writing. A few more lessons, and we enter on the reading matter.

Many words that would require the usual En sign followed by a circle S, and a full stroke, would be awkward in appearance, and difficult of easy making, if the full N were written. To provide for more brevity and grace in such combinations, a small back hook is used instead. This principle applies only when N is followed by S and another consonant that otherwise would require a twist of the S circle on the *back* side of the N. This back hook is called the *In*-hook. It stands for the syllables in, un, or *en*, in the beginning of the words, mostly before strokes with the R hook.

The printing of the words below the engraving, instead of immediately beneath, allows room for more examples.

Observe each engraved word in connection with the printed words, which are read in order as follows:

Inseparable, insuperable, enslave, enslavement, enslaver, unseemly.

Inscrutable, insolent, insult, insulter, insoluble, insecurity.

Insurmountable, unceremonious, unsalable, unsurpressed, insatiate.

Inspiration, instruction, instructive, instructress, instrument, instrumental.

Unscratched, unseal, unseized, unselected, insolvent.

Unstrained, unswept, unsaddle, unsaddled, unsalted, unscorched.

Unsoldierly, unsolicited, unsold, unsolved, unsoured.

Unsociable, unsettled, unsettlement, unshain, unsmoked.

In the word "insurmountable" Sur stands for ble. So, also, in cases where it is inconvenient to write the l hook. Copy the examples many times, reading them by their names, thus: Ins-Per-Bel, Ins-Lay-Vee, etc. The forms in the engraving may be considered about the proper size for imitation and actual reporting.

PREFIXES.

A large number of words that begin with the same syllable can be written with a contracted prefix, or a short sign for the prefix. In the following list, which is arranged alphabetically for easy reference, you will find all the prefixes commonly required in advanced writing and reporting, and should be learned by you thoroughly, by constant repetition, during the week.

Accom- is denoted by a *heavy* dot beginning a word.

Circum-, a circle on the side of the first stroke.

Con-, *com-*, *coy-*, either one is known by a *light* dot at the beginning.

Contra-, *contro-*, *counter-*, either—a tick at the beginning.

Decom-, *discon-*, *discom-*, by D sign before the rest of the word.

For-, and *fore-*, by F sign before the rest of the word.

Incon-, *incom-*, *incog-*, N above the line, and nearly over the rest of the word.

Inter-, *intro-*, half-length N above and nearly over.

Irrecon-, downward R (Ar) near the rest of the word.

Magna-, *magni-*, M over the word.

Miscon-, *miscom-*, Ms (Ems) over the rest of the word.

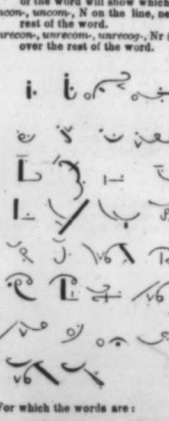
Noncon-, *noncom-*, Nn (Nen) over or through the rest of the word.

Recon-, *recom-*, *recog-*, R (Ray) near the rest of the word.

Self-, same sign and position as *circum-*. The rest of the word will show which is meant.

Uncon-, *uncom-*, N on the line, near, or above the rest of the word.

Unrecon-, *unrecom-*, *unrecog-*, Nr (Ner sign) nearly over the rest of the word.



For which the words are:

Accommo-date, accommo-dation, circum-locution, circum-navigate, concede.

Con-sent, com-bined, comm-end, cog-nizance, cognomen.

Contra-diction, contro-versy, counter-act, counterfeit, decom-pose.

Discount-ecct, fore-judge, fore-know, incon-stant, incomm-ode.

Inter-cept, inter-cession, irrecon-cilable, magnitude, magni-fy.

Miscon-ceive, misconduct, noncon-cur, recon-cile, recom-pense.

Recog-nized, self-ish, self-made, uncon-cerned, uncon-fined.

Unrecon-cilable, unrecom-pensed.

In like manner write: Accom-pany, accom-plice, accom-plish, circum-cise, circum-ference, circumscribe, circum-spect, circum-stance, circum-vent, con-cave, con-cede, con-ceit, con-ceive, con-ception, con-cern, con-cerned, con-cert, con-sulate, con-cise, con-clude, con-clusion, con-bat, combine, comm-erce, comm-ent, comm-ission, commit, comm-odious, comm-unicate, comm-unity, com-pany, com-pare, com-pass, compose, com-passion, com-pel, com-pensate, compete, com-petent, com-plete, com-pletion, com-pulsion, com-prise, com-promise, com-pute, cognition, cog-nizant, con tradict, contra-distinguish, contro-vert, counter-action, counter-check, counterfeiter, counter-mand, counter-march, decom-position, decom-pound, discon-cert, discon-nection, discon-sol., discon-tinue, discom-fit, discom-fort, discom-posure, fore-bode, fore-close, fore-end, forefinger, fore-known, fore-see, fore-saw, incon-clusive, incon-siderable, incon-siderate, incon-sideration, incon-solable, incon-stancy, incon-trollable, incon-venience, incog-nizable, incom-patible, incompetent, incom-plete, incom-prehensible, incog-nito, inter-action, inter-cede, inter-cessor, inter-changable, inter-communication, inter-course, inter-dict, inter-diction, inter-fere, inter-jacent, inter-lace, inter-leave, inter-line, inter-libration, etc.

To save space here, take Webster's or Worcester's Unabridged Dictionary, and pick out and write any and all words commencing with either of the above prefixes, one at a time.

[To be continued.]

THE MARBLE QUARRIES AT CARRARA.

THE famous marble quarries of Carrara, although they have been worked since the reign of Agustus, and have furnished a steady and enormous supply to the whole civilized globe, seem to be inexhaustible. They compose an entire mountain range, and embrace every variety and quality of marble, from the coarse common kind to the statuary marble, Monte Crestola and Monte Bagro yielding the largest and finest blocks. The quarries number some five hundred, only about twenty of them furnishing the marble used by sculptors, and some six thousand persons are employed in them. The marble taken out year before last was in the vicinity of one hundred and twenty thousand tons, valued at $2,400,000, of which forty thousand tons came to the United States. The export of marble to this country has increased immensely within twelve to fifteen years, the then largest marble firm now at Carrara being American.

Talks with Boys about Foreign Lands.

AUSTRALIA.

SOUTH, NORTH AND WEST AUSTRALIA.

SOUTH AUSTRALIA is the name of another colony of great importance on the great Australian continent. It also includes Northern Australia. It embraces the large and almost uninhabited half of the colony north of lat. 24 deg. Within its limits are included Kangaroo Island, Melville island and several smaller islands on the north coast. The principal inlets are Encounter Bay, St. Vincent Gulf, in the mouth of which lies Kangaroo Island, and Spencer Gulf, which extends more than two hundred miles inland.

Of its many good harbors, Port Lincoln, or Spencer Gulf, is the best.

South Australia contains a variety of soils and scenery, almost every kind of landscape being found within its limits. In the northern parts of the colony the scenery is sterile and uninviting, consisting largely of scrub and rock, but a good third of its surface is agricultural and pastoral land, and another third wooded ranges suitable for pasturage. The scrub land is very valuable for its mineral wealth, some of the richest mines being discovered in it.

The principal chains of mountains are the Flinders range, Gawler range, Warburton and Stuart ranges.

The Murray, Wakefield, Gawler, Torrens, Liverpool, East and South Alligator, Adelaide, Daly, Victoria and Roper are the principal rivers. Indeed the Roper, which flows into the Gulf of Carpentaria, is navigable for large vessels for nearly one hundred miles.

Lakes Eyre, Torrens and Gairdner are large bodies of salt-water, each more than one hundred and fifty miles long.

South Australia is very rich in mineral products; iron ore abounds, but copper constitutes its principal wealth.

The famous Burra-Burra mine, near Kooringa, about one hundred miles north by east of Adelaide, was discovered in 1844, and opened in the same year. From ten thousand to fifteen thousand tons of ore are raised annually, yielding about two thousand five hundred tons of pure copper. In 1870 sixty-one copper-mines were worked, giving an aggregate annual yield of one hundred and fifty thousand tons.

Gold has been discovered in several places, and four hundred and thirty-eight reefs were registered in 1870, giving an annual yield of ten thousand five hundred ounces.

Small diamonds have been found near Echunga, and jasper, chalcedony, and opal abound. The climate of the inhabited part of the country is very fine, but that of the scrub land in the north is exceedingly hot and dry.

The forests contain much large timber, but wood for cabinet, or other fine work, is imported.

In the northern parts three kinds of wild fig, a species of wild grape and wild yams have been found. Native wheat and oats, rye grass and rice grass also grow in the north. All the fruits common to temperate climates succeed remarkably well, and gardening is very generally practiced, many varieties of which are cultivated. Of late years this colony has become a large grain-producing country, enough grain being grown in some years to supply the neighboring colonies and to ship many cargoes to England, when it brings high prices.

Adelaide, the capital of South Australia, is situated about six miles from the east shore of St. Vincent's Gulf. It is divided by the river Torrens into North and South Adelaide, and is surrounded by a semi-circle of hills. It possesses several fine squares, streets and churches, a chamber of commerce, and a large botanical garden, with a conservatory. King William Street is the central thoroughfare, and Hindley Street the chief business locality. It is united by railway with Port Adelaide, through which passes most of the commerce of South Australia. There are about 80,000 inhabitants in Adelaide proper, and the city may safely be recorded as one of the most prosperous in Australia.

* * * * *

Western Australia comprises all the lands west of long. 129 deg. east; the coast, which is mostly flat, is about 3,000 miles long, and is indented by many bays, and fringed by numerous small islands and coral reefs, inside of which is good anchorage. The west coast has a sandy soil, composed chiefly of the remains of old coral reefs; vast plains of sand, covered with spinifex and scrubby timber, but with no grass nor watercourses, are found in the interior; but there is much land suitable for sheep-raising and agriculture.

Flowers, fruit and vegetables from all parts of the world are easily cultivated, and deer, Angora goats, hares and trout have been introduced.

The mineral riches are very great; silver, lead, copper, iron and plumbago are found in many places. The principal industries are stock-raising and agriculture. Wine and silk are produced to some extent; the cocoanut is raised on the north-western coast, and sugar-cane has been introduced from Mauritius.

The pearl-fisheries on the northwestern coast are very valuable, and the exportations of sandal-wood are increasing yearly. The natives have the same distinguishing habits as the rest of the Australian savages, and are equally lazy and disgusting. Our illustration represents the encampment of a small tribe of savages. Being in the vicinity of a town they are pretty well advanced in civilization for Australians.

JUST SPLENDID!

Minnie's Rescue from the Wilds of Siberia,

By ROGER STARBUCK,

Begins in our next.

Orville and Dan;

Or,

Adventures in Japan,

By COMMODORE AH-LOOK.

Wandering Willie;

Or,

Lost in the Bush.

THE ADVENTURES OF A MISSIONARY'S SON IN THE WILDS OF AFRICA.

By one of the most popular authors whose stories were ever read by boys.

Three Boys:

A Story of a High School,

By W. O. STODDARD.

Roy the Ranger:

A Story of the Mexican War.

And

Wild Rose and Violet;

Or,

Fun at Mrs. Hawk's.

Six Continued Stories, by Bracebridge Hemyng, Commodore Ah-Look, Roger Starbuck, W. O. Stoddard, and other well-known writers.

To those of our readers who are desirous of obtaining a full and interesting record of all the important current events of the day we recommend FRANK LESLIE'S ILLUSTRATED NEWSPAPER. *No event of importance transpires unnoticed by it. Each number contains eight pages of the most interesting illustrations, one page being devoted to foreign subjects. Admirable serial stories, useful information, the latest discoveries among the wonders of nature and art, instructive editorials, cartoons, etc., etc., continually appear. It is a perfect library of reference concerning the history of the world for the past twenty-three years. It is published every Wednesday. Single copies, price 10 cents; annual subscription, $4, post-paid.*

CAUTION.

Subscribers, in ordering our publications, should be careful to write the name of FRANK LESLIE *in full, and direct their letters to 53, 55 and 57 Park Place, New York, from which address all our publications are issued.*

Advertisements for any of Frank Leslie's Publications will be received at regular rates, by Col. W. B. Crooks, 1,309 Chestnut St., Philadelphia.

Send Twenty-five Cents

FOR SPECIMEN COPY OF

Frank Leslie's

SUNDAY MAGAZINE.

Read "The Wit, Wisdom and Pathos of Childhood"; see the purest and best stories and poems for

Boys and Girls,

and grown people. It makes Sunday a cheerful day. There is nothing stupid, morose or heavy in our Sunday Magazine. Every man who wants to have a glad and happy household should let his children have the Sunday Magazine.

READ THE ABOVE TO YOUR PARENTS.

Frank Leslie's Publishing House,

53, 55 & 57 Park Place, New York.

FRANK LESLIE'S

Boys' & Girls' Weekly

THE

BEST BOYS' PAPER PUBLISHED.

COMMODORE AH-LOOK writes for it.

ROGER STARBUCK writes for it.

BRACEBRIDGE HEMYNG writes for it.

W. O. STODDARD writes for it.

LIEUT. JAYNE writes for it.

OUR LETTER-BOX.

THOMAS JONES.—We have received letters from others as bright as yourself. Some boys think they are very sharp, but cannot see very far. We are publishing a story by Bracebridge Hemyng, Author of "Jack Harkaway," and these bright boys who pretend to know everything do not know a good story when they see it. If we put in "Robinson Crusoe" or "Jack, the Giant-Killer," and say it is by Bracebridge Hemyng, these clever judges of stories will say that it is the best story he ever wrote.

W. M. S. asks whether there is any place in Philadelphia or New York" where they give rewards for the rare American coins." The very idea is absurd. There are dealers who buy and sell coins, and auction houses that have coin sales from time to time. There seems to be a great many wrong ideas afloat about rare coins. By writing to some coin-dealer and getting his catalogue, a boy will learn more in a day than he can by asking random questions. A curtain coin of a particular year may be scarce, and bring a hundred dollars if as fresh as when it came from the mint, or because it is a very scarce type with some little difference distinguishing it from others of that year; and the same coin of a different type will not bring five cents, or the same coin of the year before or the year after. All this depends on the fancy of collectors. A cent of a year may be sought by collectors who care nothing for the dime, quarter, half-dollar, or dollar, or the half-cent of the same year.

THE ROUND TABLE.

PRIZES.

To be Read by all who Send Answers.

FOR A COMPLETE SET OF ANSWERS TO ALL THE ENIGMAS, ETC., IN THIS NUMBER.

For the best and earliest, due allowance being made for the distance of each competitor - $5.00
For the next best - - - - - - - - 2.50
For the third in merit and promptness - - 1.00

N. B.—There is no prize offered for an answer to only one puzzle or riddle. The answers must be to ALL. Competitors in all parts of the country have an equal chance.

ANSWERS TO RIDDLES, ETC., IN No. 652.

1. Care, Race, Acre. 2. D, Pea, Panic, Don't lie, Allied, Cld, E. 3. Ben-nonce. 4. Postage-stamps. 5. Decamp, Egeria, Cedars, Ararat, Mirage, Pastes. 6. Fig-my. 7. Woman, Miles, Nests.—WoMaN, OvInE, MiLeS, AbEnT, NeStS. 8. Earl, Ahoy, Roar, Lyre. 9. Man-drake. 10. Ta(b)le, Star(t)ling, Bo(u)nd, Li(n)en.

WINNERS OF PRIZES IN No. 652.

1.—J. H. Manning, Ypsilanti, Mich.

2.—C. M. Greene, 1121 S Street, N. W. Washington, D. C.

3.—F. S. Hall, P. O. Box 401, Taunton, Mass.

NOTE.—To some, the time between issuing the puzzles and the publication of the answers seems long, but we wish to give time for answers from all parts of the country.

ENIGMAS, CHARADES, ETC.

1.—SQUARE WORDS.

A NEIGHBORING British colony; odors; injurious; to fine; a waltzer; at the rear of the ship.

2.—DOUBLE ACROSTIC.

In the animal kingdom we hold a place,
However small we be;
My primals everywhere are found,
My finals equally.

1. A whale well-known to whalers bold;
2. An Indian foot-soldier by this is told;
3. Your meaning's hidden when in these you speak;
4. Dreaded by all, lest curse should be in vain,
5. Or worse, might this form attain;
6. Disorder prevails, when this is once begun,
7. And governments must this do, ere harm is done.

3.—DIAMOND PUZZLE.

Five; a marsh; crude tartar; to deliver and to expire; a plant; knotted; to defame in writing or print; old age; a vowel.

4.—CHARADE.

I use my first while writing this,
On board my third at sea;
My second means the human race,
And now my whole you see.
By it we can our thoughts impart;
'Tis not attained by chance, but art.

5.—CHARADE.

Young Jack had strong teeth,
Now behead what you'd call
One who used his teeth well.
And second at once will befall.

But Jack did my last
With such gluttonous haste,
That he fell very first,
And had medicines horrid to taste.

Had he but been to school,
Much better he'd have known,
But he was my whole,
I'm ashamed here to own.

6.—SQUARE WORDS.

Suspenders; to be sorry; a god; underground; to lace together; laid up.

7.—DELETION.

There is a whole throughout the land,
Strong men drop down and die,
And for the bread no loving hand
Can give, their children cry;
And second enters ev'ry place
With quiet, noiseless tread,
And stiffes in its cold embrace
That morning cry for bread.

If my second you would make,
From my whole one letter take.

8.—CHARADE.

My first roams free in forest wide,
And to my second ne'er needs a guide;
The hunter by my second sitting
Watches my first through forest flitting;
My first may ne'er my second see,
Yet cross the river and still be free.
My whole a noble hero bore,
Who will on ocean sail no more;
Through smoke and flame, bound tight with ropes,
He bore on me a nation's hopes.

9.—CHARADE.

Of bricks and mortar I consist,
Your orchard am concealing;
But thieves in their efforts don't desist
When they the fruit are stealing—
I mean (this for your information)
It does not stop their depredation.

From next issues a sweet perfume;
It scents the woodland dell;
How beautiful, when in full bloom,
The rose and sweet bluebell!
I love to wander in a perfumed glade,
To call them for a much-loved maid.

My total grows beside my first,
And in a second sweet;
In Summer, when in bloom they burst,
With pleasure we them greet.

10.—MUTATION.

Whole, I am deemed rather weak;
Beheaded, and sanctify I speak;
Now, if from me you take my all,
Whole like I to you "How" will call.

FUN FOR THE BOYS.

A LACONIA youth, who has just lost his inamorata, sings about the fair sex in the following doleful manner:

"The women they are fickle things,
Just like a little bird that sings
As sweetly to the dairy-maid
As to the lass in silks arrayed.

"They're winning, loving, sweet, demure,
And when you think you're one secure,
They'll say that you're a trifle mellow,
And so they'll seek another fellow.

"They all are worse than forty aches,
Than rheumatism, gout or quakes.
I'd rather have a Saint Vitus dance,
And be obliged to hop and prance,
Than to have a woman, young or old,
Though she were worth her weight in gold."

"I HAVE a theory about the dead languages," said a new student. "What is it?" asked the professor. "That they were killed by being studied too hard."

A WESTERN editor thus kindly alludes to a contemporary: "He is young yet; but he can sit at his desk and brush cobwebs from the ceiling with his ears."

"MA," said a little girl, "if you'll let me buy some candy I'll be good." "My child," solemnly responded the mother, "you should not be good for pay; you should be good for nothing."

WHY is the priest when he catechises the children in church the funniest fellow in the building? Because he is the querist.

ASEL, in Hebrew, means vanity; and a belle, in English, has much the same signification.

SCENE: Fancy bestery; facetious youth purchasing bow for his sweetheart. *Facetious Youth* (to shopgirl)—"I suppose you have all kinds of ties here, miss?" *Shopgirl*—"Yes, I believe we have, sir. What kind would you like to see?" *Facetious Youth.* (winking to his sweetheart)—"Could you supply me with a pigsty?" *Shopgirl*—"With pleasure, sir; just hold down your head and I'll take your measure." Tableau!

AN interesting incident is recorded in connection with her Majesty's short stay at the English Embassy in Paris. The bedroom which she occupied had been that of the Princess Borghese—the Pauline for whom Napoleon I. conceived a warm affection—and the table still bears the letter "P," being the initial of her Christian name.

PRESIDENT LINCOLN once listened patiently while a friend read a long manuscript to him, and then asked: "What do you think of it? How will it take?" The President reflected a little while, and then answered: "Well, for people who like that kind of thing, I think that it is just about the kind of thing they'd like."

PRENTISIAN (who has dropped half a dollar in front of "the blind")—"Why, you confounded humbug, you're not blind!" *Beggar*—"Not I, sir! If the card says I am they have given me a wrong one. I am deaf and dumb."

A CORRESPONDENT at Portland, Oregon, furnishes this of the "Heathen Chinee." John has bought a watch at our jeweler's, but as it ran too slow he took it back, saying, "Watchee no good." "What is the matter with it?" asked the jeweler. "Oh," said John, "watchee too muchee by'm-by."

AN American editor reading that Patti gets ninety-nine thousand marks for singing in Berlin nine nights, says he recollects getting about that number at a boarding-school once for singing one night—and he didn't sing long, either. Plucky boy!

THE PRECOCITY OF PETER.—"You must be sure and bear this in mind, Peter," said the good governess, "the seasons frequently alternate." "I believe you," replied Peter; "and they often alternate as well." A scuffle, and then a dismal yell were subsequently heard through that schoolroom door.

A FATHER of three sons and five daughters was asked what family he had. The answer was: "I have three sons, and they have each five sisters." "Mercy!" replied the interrogator; "such a family."

"ALWAYS try to hit the nail upon the head, my boy," said an uncle to his nephew. But the nephew's little cousin whispered to him, "Don't hit the nail on your finger, for it hurts awful."

ADVERTISEMENTS.

FOREIGN STAMPS.

50 VARIETIES, 14c. Turkey, Egypt, Brazil, Cuba, etc.
100 SCARCE VARIETIES, 28c. Finland, Moldo-Wallachian, Rome, Hanover, etc.
Over 500 different packets and sets always in stock.
Illustrated Price Catalogue, post free, 12c.
The Illustrated Foreign Stamp and Great Prospectus, containing a variety of information valuable to collectors, gratis, post free.
STANLEY, GIBBONS, & CO., 8 Gower Street, London.

COINS AND STAMPS. 10 large U. S. copper cents, good condition, for 20 cts. and 3 cts. postage. Complete catalogue 15 cts., post-paid. 50 varieties stamps 10 cts. 125 for 40 cts. 200, all warranted genuine, for $1.00. Send stamp for circular to O. SCHMIDT, Hoboken, N. J.

MODEL LOVE LETTER. TWO for 10 cents. *Sure to please.* Address Mrs. E. Martin, Box 547, Baltimore, Md. Name BOYS' & GIRLS' WEEKLY.

AN AGENT WANTED in every town and city in U. S. and Canada. Send stamp for circular. Box 74, Lancaster, Pa.

$777 A YEAR and expenses to agents. Outfit free. Address, P. O. VICKERY, Augusta, Maine.

20 of our *Prettiest Motto Chromo Cards*, or 25 *Illuminated Chromos*, 10c. NASSAU CARD CO., Nassau, N.Y.

50 CHROMO, Gold-Border, &c., 10c., no 2 alike, or 20 Cupid cards, 10c. J. B. HUSTED, Nassau, N. Y.

50 Nice Assorted Scroll Cards, in different colors, 10c., post-paid. Scroll Card Co., Westville, Conn.

M'ALLISTER'S

BIRD-LIME

For Catching Birds, etc. Twenty-five cents per Box. For Sale by F. E. M'ALLISTER, 29 FULTON St., N. Y., and at all Bird Stores.

THE EXCELSIOR $3 Press Prints labels, cards, etc. (Self-inker $5) 3 larger sizes. For business, pleasure, young or old. Catalogue of Presses, Type, &c., for 3 stamps. KELSEY & Co. Meriden, Conn. ROTARY JOB PRESS, $100. Over 10 the largest factory in the United States

PHOTOGRAPHIC APPARATUS Complete, 50 cents, postpaid (is so simple that any boy or girl can photograph perfectly at once); consists of the necessary chemicals, printing-frame, negatives, albumen paper, directions, etc. Worth Brothers, 727 Sixth Street, New York.

JUDGE FOR YOURSELF By sending 35 cents, with age, height, color of eyes and hair, you will receive, by return mail a correct picture of your future husband or wife, with name and date of marriage.
Address, W. FOX, Box 265, Fultonville, N. Y.

CARDS 4 Chromo, 4 Transparent, 4 Gold Leaf, 4 Lily-of-the-Valley, 10 Rosette, 10 Scroll, 1 Finger Ring, 1 Love-Letter, 1 Card-case with name, all for 15c. 8 pkt $1.00. National Card Co., Northford, Ct.

25 GILT-EDGE CARDS with name, 15c. 60 mixed in case, 10c. Any boy or girl can earn a gold watch in 5 days selling our cards. Outfit 10c. AGENTS' CARD CO., Arcade, N. Y.

TRANSPARENT CARDS containing 40 designs, very unique. Your name on 40 in neat case, 10c. Hill Bros., Ashland Mass.

50 Chromo, Snowflake, & Lace Cards, with name, only 10 cents. 40 all chromos, with name, &c. 12 packs for $1.00. STAR PRINT CO., Northford, Ct.

CARDS, 10 Lily-of-the-Valley, 10 Scroll, 10 Engraved 10 Transparent, 1 Model Love Letter, 1 Card Case, Name on all, 15cts. WARD & CO., Northford, Conn.

50 Extra *Bristol cards*, with name, in *Elegant Case*, 25c. *Best offered!* U. S. Card Co., Durham, Conn.

50 *Snowflake, Motto, Chromo, Favorite, etc.* CARDS, *in gold & jet*, 10c. Best! Burkett & Co., Durham, Ct.

50 Snowflake, &c., Cards, name on each, 10c. Send for price-list. C. E. Kay, 165 Ferry St., New Haven, Ct.

50 Snowflake, Chromo, etc. CARDS, *Name in Gold and Jet*, 10c. U. S. CARD CO., Northford, Conn.

50 Perfumed, Snowflake, Chromo, Motto cards, name in gold and jet, 10c. G. A. Spring, E. Wallingford, Ct.

$77 a Month and expenses guaranteed to Agents. Outfit free. SHAW & CO., AUGUSTA, MAINE.

25 of the Prettiest Cards you ever saw, with name, 10c., postpaid. Geo. I. Reed & Co., Nassau, N. Y.

40 PAGE BOOK OF WONDERS for a 3-cent stamp. Address, S. FOX & CO., 301 Canal Street, New York.

SEND FOR

Frank Leslie's

MARVELOUSLY CHEAP BOOKS.

8vo., Heavy Paper Covers, Illustrated.

	Cts.
MICHAEL STROGOFF. By JULES VERNE	45
FRITZ, THE EMIGRANT. By CHARLES GAYLER	35
MONTAGUE; OR, THE BELLE OF THE MATINEE. By CHARLES GAYLER	35
REAPING THE WHIRLWIND. By MARY CECIL HAY	45
JACK HARKAWAY OUT WEST AMONG THE INDIANS. By BRACEBRIDGE HEMYNG	30
LONE WOLF, THE APACHE CHIEF. By ROBERT H. JAYNE	15

Convenient 12mo. Books, Bound in Boards, Uniform in Style.

LIVING OR DEAD. A Story Founded on Fact. 288 pages, heavy board covers	50
WIFE IN NAME ONLY. By the Author of "Dora Thorne," etc., etc. 288 pages, heavy board covers	50
THE HALF-SISTERS. A Story of Metropolitan Life. 288 pages, heavy board covers	50
A RUSSIAN BULLET AND A BROKEN HEART. 288 pages, heavy board covers	50

For sale by all Newsdealers and at all Bookstores, or sent, postage paid, to any address in the United States, on receipt of the price named. Address,

Frank Leslie's Publishing House,

53, 55 and 57 Park Place, New York.

A HUNT WITH THE ZULU KING.

IN my wanderings in South Africa I was for a time a guest of a great Zulu chief, and was invited by him to attend a grand hopo, or general battue. This is one of the most successful modes of destroying game wholesale.

During the frequent droughts which afflict the country of the Bakouins in Africa, herds of buffalo, zebras, giraffes, gnus, rhinoceroses and antelopes come down to the never-failing springs of Kolobeng. The people, themselves suffering from the dearth which had blasted their crops, could not behold unmoved the manna thus presented from the wilderness.

They resort to the hopo—a sort of mammoth trap composed of two hedges of trees cut hastily and well filled in, thick and high, and running together like the two sides of a letter V. They do not touch, however, but run along for fifty paces straight, when they end on the edge of a pit four or five yards square and six or eight feet deep. Trees are placed on the edges to prevent the escape of animals. The whole affair is covered with branches to deceive the eyes of the animals. As the two hedges are about a mile long and the base of the triangle about the same length, a tribe forming a circle of three or four miles around the hopo and gradually narrowing in is sure to encircle an immense quantity of game.

The hunters drive the animals toward the mouth of the hopo, and men placed opposite them drive them into the only apparent avenue of escape, the path that leads to destruction. In a short time the narrowing road is filled with a struggling, living mass, the animals in the rear leaping over those in front in their frantic efforts to escape. It becomes a fearful sight when the whole tribe, finally gathered in, comes yelling in the rear, and the animals go plunging on each other into the pit, where those who are not killed by their pursuers or crushed by the fall writhe in fruitless endeavors to escape their fate.

Noises thickened round me, and men rushed past, their skin cloaks streaming in the wind, till, from their black naked figures and wild gestures, it wanted no Martin to imagine a Pandemonium.

I pressed hard upon the flying animals, and galloping down the lane, saw the pits choke-full; while several of the quaggas, noticing their danger, turned upon me, ears back, and teeth showing, compelling me to retreat with equal celerity from them. Some natives standing in the lane made the fugitives run the gauntlet with their assagais. As each quagga made a dash at them, they pressed their backs into the hedge, and held their hard cowhide shields in his face, hurling their spears into his side as he passed onward. One managed to burst through the hedge and escape; the rest fell pierced with assagais, like so many porcupines. Men are often killed in these hunts, when buffaloes turn back in a similar way.

It was some little time before Bari and I could find a gap in the hedge and get round to the pits, but at length we found one, and then a scene exhibited itself which baffles description. So full were the pits that many animals had run over the bodies of their comrades and got free. Never can I forget that bloody, murderous spectacle; a moaning, wriggling mass of quaggas, huddled and jammed together in the most inextricable confusion; some were on their backs, with their heels up, and others lying across them; some had taken a dive and only displayed their tails; all lay interlocked like a bucket full of eels.

The savages, frantic with excitement, yelled round them, thrusting their assagais with smiles of satisfaction into the upper ones, and leaving them to suffocate those beneath, evidently rejoicing in the agony of their victims. Moselli, the chief, was there in person, and after the lapse of half an hour, the poles at the entrance of the pits being removed, the dead bodies, in all the contortions and stiffness of death, were drawn out by hooked stakes secured through the main sinew of the neck, a rude song, with extemporary words, being chanted the while.

SOMETHING LIKE A SNAKE.

SEVEN or eight years ago much alarm was caused along the line of the Housatonic Railway by the appearance of a tremendous snake. The reptile seemed to make its home in a dense swamp near the railroad track. It had been seen by different persons, who were terror-stricken by its wonderful size. At various times the snake was shot at by hunting parties, but it always managed to get away safely.

The track of the Housatonic Railway runs directly through the swamp named. Early one morning, as a passenger train was proceeding on its way, the engineer discovered a long black object lying across the rails, and he shut off steam and whistled for brakes. While the speed was slackening the engineer saw that it was the snake about which so much had been said, and he put on steam again, intending if possible to run it down and cut it in two; but just before the engine reached it, the end of the tail slid off the rail, while the head was already hid in the dense swamp.

BOAR-HUNTING.

BRITTIAN is celebrated in history and in ballad as the home of the wild boar, and for its Yule-tide feasts, where the soused head of the forest monarch, garnished with sprigs of holly and evergreens, was borne in great state and solemnity "upon a silver platter with minstrelsye" to the oaken dining-hall—a ceremony derived from most ancient Celtic times.

As late as the reign of James I. it was still the custom in Wales, when a wild boar had been killed, to bear the head on a platter in solemn procession before the chiefs, though by some it is supposed to have originated with the students of Queen's College, Oxford, and to have been instituted in honor of one of their number, who, while reading Aristotle on a walk, being suddenly assailed by a wild boar, crammed the volume into the throat of the aggressor, crying, "*Græcum est!*" till he had fairly choked the beast to death.

India is now the great field of the ambitious sportsman, and the boars found there are the largest and most formidable in the world, roaming the jungle without fearing either tiger or panther.

And although the former ventures to attack him, he is usually worsted, and frequently answers for his temerity with his life; while the panther, with superior sagacity, confines himself to piglings and youngsters, whose teeth are as yet undeveloped. The Indian boar is much superior in size, strength, and swiftness to his brethren of Europe and Northern and Western Asia.

"Pig-sticking," as the sport is denominated by the Anglo-Indians, is always conducted on horseback, the weapon chiefly employed being a lance of tough bamboo armed with a steel blade, shaped like a laurel-leaf and keen as a razor's edge. Fire-arms are not allowed, except perhaps as a *dernier ressort*, and in many parts of the Deccan any one who should carry them in the field with the purpose of using them in the chase would be subjected to complete ostracism, so far as sporting matters are concerned; but the sabre or native sword is always permissible. The length of the spear, too, and its size and shape, are matters of regulation, though varying materially in different provinces. That of the Bengal sportsman is not more than six and a half feet in length, the shaft being weighted at its upper extremity, and furnished with an unusually broad, stout blade. It is not used lancewise, but held firmly in the hand, in such a manner that the point projects about eighteen inches in front of the stirrup-iron, so that when the charge is made and the horse dexterously swerves aside, the animal impales himself; and such is his tenacity of life that he frequently forces himself along the shaft in his attempts at revenge.

We read that Richard Coeur de Lion, under similar circumstances, was forced to relinquish his lance, leap over the boar's back, and end the battle with his sword.

In Bombay and Hyderabad the lance is from a foot and a half to three and a half feet longer, though considerably lighter, and is carried under hand. The art of riding a wild boar is to approach him as close as possible, but constantly keeping him on the spear or right hand. To do this the horse must turn with the game, and ever be well in hand. In short, as the hog flags in speed, the hunter must be able to spring his horse upon him, so to speak, the spear then going through the foe; and if the boar charges at the same instant the increased impetus of two bodies meeting at such speed will generally drive the weapon through from end to end. The honor of the day is always to him who draws the first blood, or, in hunting parlance, "wins the first spear"; and the rivalry to gain it is such that the last few moments of a well-contested hunt are like the finishing run of a desperate steeplechase.

Where there is danger of losing the game among the reeds and undergrowth, it is common to deliver a spear at him, in order to hamper his movements, and prevent concealment in the jungle.

There are also many fancy thrusts in vogue among the habitual worshipers of the sport, which demand not only a well-trained horse, and iron hand, but a cool head and steady nerves, to render them other than foolhardy or dangerous. The most common of these, perhaps, consists in grasping the spear overhandedly about eighteen inches from the butt, carrying it so that the shaft extends nearly horizontally backward, though with a downward inclination, the blade being in the rear of the horse's croup.

When the hog charges, which he does right at the horse's fore-legs, the sportsman rises in his stirrups, pivoting his horse quickly to the left on his hind legs, and delivers an overhanded stab perpendicularly downward between the shoulders.

But if the horse fail his master at this instant, the boars tusks mangle his legs and breast in a frightful manner, or perhaps completely disembowel him.

The great aim of the sportsman when the hog is started is to keep up a hot pursuit until the game becomes half exhausted and turns at bay. Then he is as savage an animal as can well be imagined, when with flashing eyes and foaming mouth he dashes at first one and then another of the horsemen, sometimes fairly driving them from the field.

A HUNT WITH THE ZULU KING.—THE HOPO, AN AFRICAN METHOD OF HUNTING.

Four or five years ago, two men were riding along a road which skirts the swamp, and looking ahead, they saw a dark object lying across the roadway. As they neared it it began to wriggle slowly away, and then it was discovered to be the famous snake. It slowly disappeared into the deep underbush, and the men were certain, from the measurement of the ground were they first saw it stretched out, that it was over twenty feet in length.

Parties were organized to hunt the reptile, but without success.

Two men, named Kelly and Smith, both well and favorably known in the neighborhood, went into the swamp recently, with a yoke of oxen and a sledge to get a load of wood, the ground being frozen so hard that there was no difficulty in passing over any portion of it in safety. They came to a large button-wood tree, which, becoming decayed, had fallen to the ground. They discovered that it was hollow, and in order to handle it easily they applied a woodsman's saw to it. They had sawed nearly through one part of it, when suddenly the saw grated as though it had struck a stone. They applied their axes, and split the tree, when, to their astonishment, the obstacle which the saw had struck proved to be bones. Then they opened the tree as far as they could find bones, the length opened being twenty-one feet. The bones proved to be those of the monstrous reptile so often seen. The largest bones measured six inches in diameter, and from that tapered down to smaller sizes. The tail of the snake was found imbedded in the upper part of the tree.

There is no doubt that this large tree had been the snake's Winter home for many years, and in it he died. The bones and other remains have been preserved, and will be sent to the Society of Natural Sciences.

HOW THIMBLES ARE MADE.

THE manufacture of thimbles is very simple, but singularly interesting. Coin silver is mostly used, and is obtained by purchasing coin dollars. Hence it happens that the profits of the business are affected instantaneously by all variations in the nation's greenback promise to pay. The first operation strikes a novice as almost wicked, for it is nothing else than putting a lot of bright silver dollars, fresh from the mint, into dirty crucibles, and melting them up into solid ingots. These are rolled into the required thickness, and cut by a stamp into circular pieces of the required size. A solid metal bar on the inside of the intended thimble, moved by powerful machinery up and down in a bottomless mold of the outside of the thimbles bends the circular disks into the thimble shapes as fast as they can be placed under the descending bar. Once in shape, the work of brightening, polishing and decorating is done upon a lathe. First, the blank form is fitted with a rapidly revolving rod. A slight touch of a sharp chisel takes a thin shaving from the end, another does the same on the side, and the third rounds off the rim. A round steel rod dipped in oil and pressed upon the surface gives it a lustrous polish. Then a little revolving steel wheel, whose edge is a raised ornament, held against the revolving blank, prints that ornament just outside the rim. A second wheel prints a different ornament around the centre, while a third wheel, with sharp points, makes the indentations on the lower half and end of the thimble. The inside is brightened and polished in a similar way, the thimble being held on a revolving mold. All that remains to be done is to boil the completed thimbles in soapsuds, to remove the oil, brush them up and pack them for the trade.